

Story by NISIOISIN  
Retold by Mitsuru Hattori

# Imperfect

# Girl

1





# Imperfect Girl



Story by  
**NISIOISIN**

Retold by  
**Mitsuru Hattori**

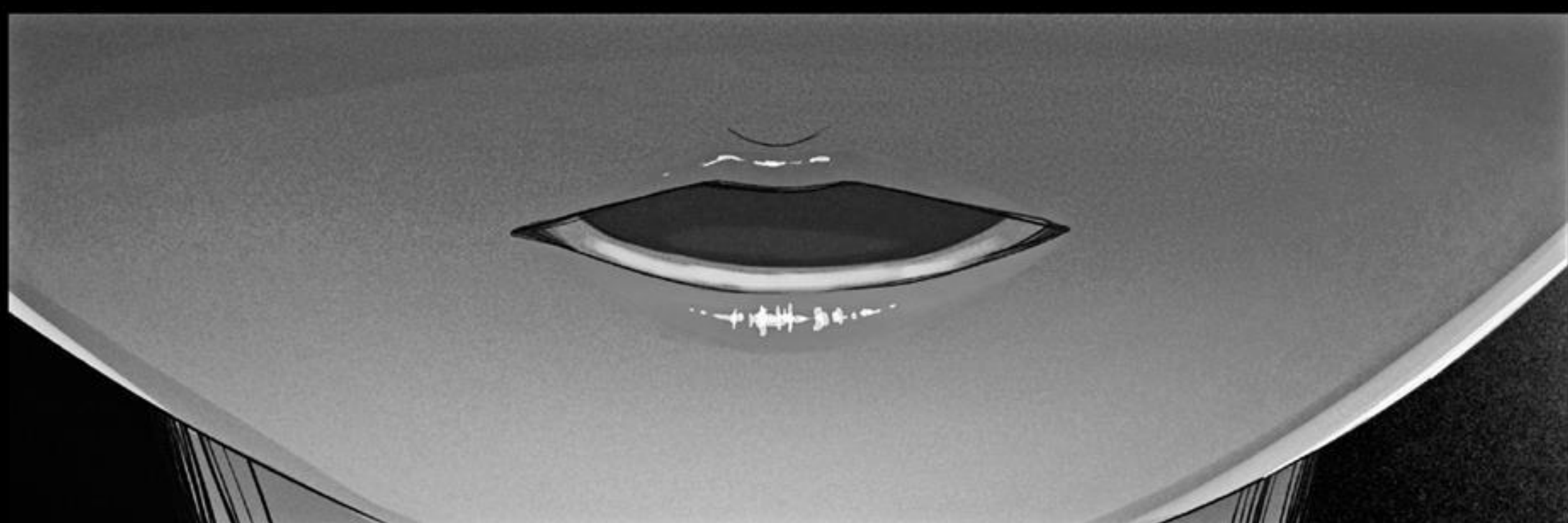
Original Character  
Concept:  
**Foo Midori**

# 1



**This is  
not a  
tale.**









I'll be leaving now.



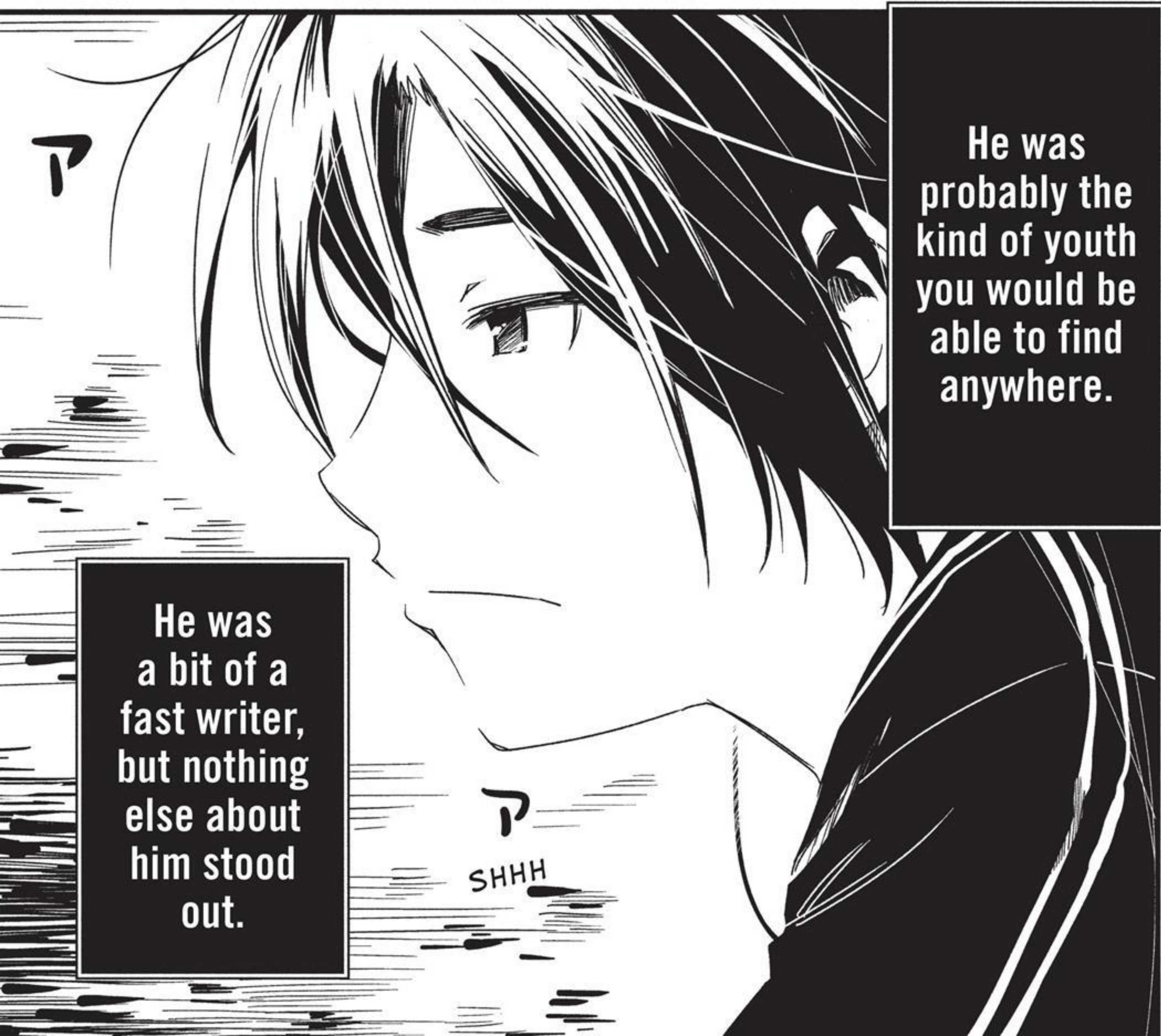






This is  
about a  
young  
man

who  
wanted  
to  
become  
an  
author.

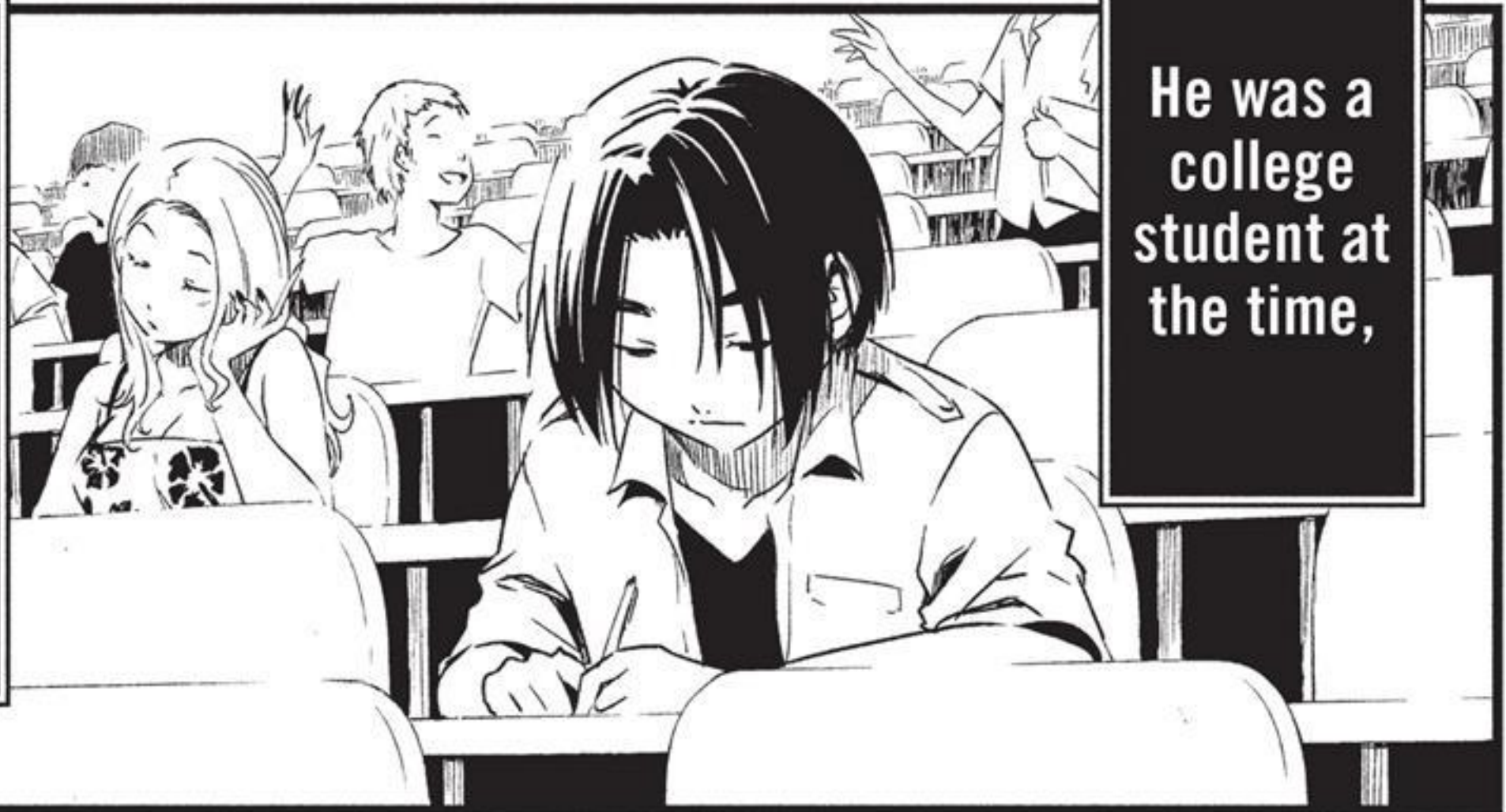


He was  
probably the  
kind of youth  
you would be  
able to find  
anywhere.

He was  
a bit of a  
fast writer,  
but nothing  
else about  
him stood  
out.

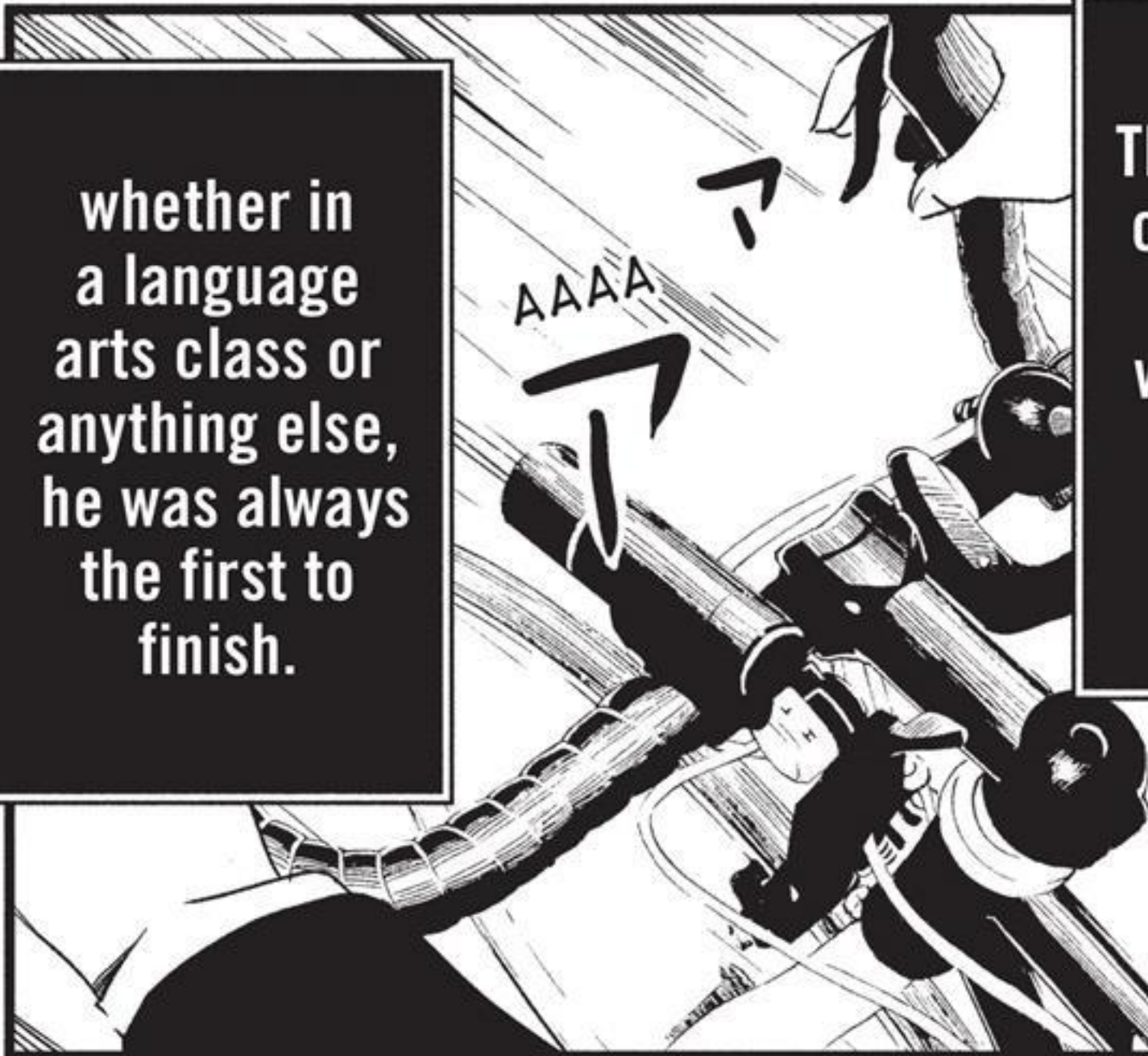


and his  
greatest  
talents were  
writing reports  
and taking  
essay tests.

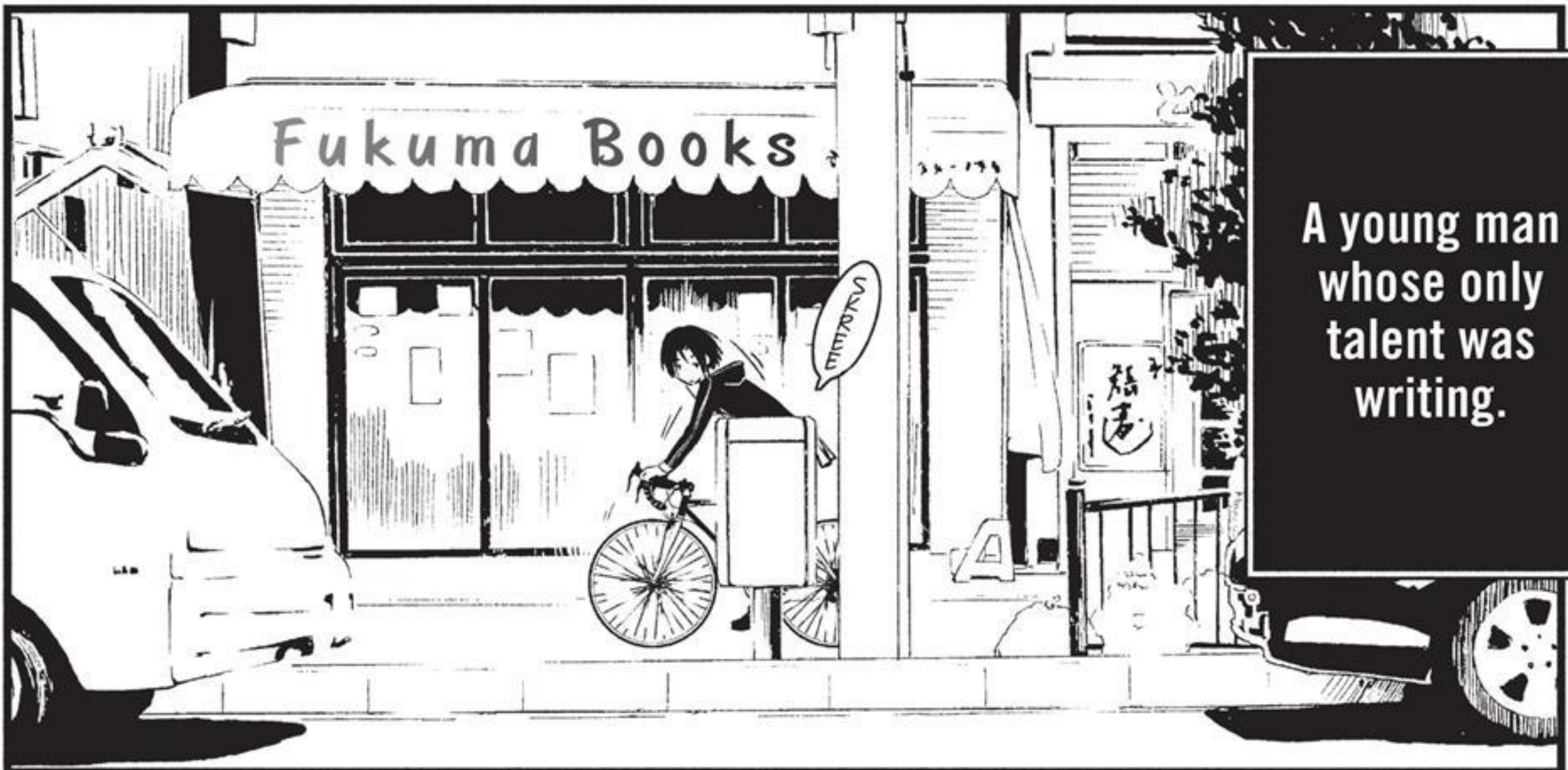


He was a  
college  
student at  
the time,

whether in  
a language  
arts class or  
anything else,  
he was always  
the first to  
finish.



Thinking back  
on that time,  
no matter  
when he had  
to write an  
essay,



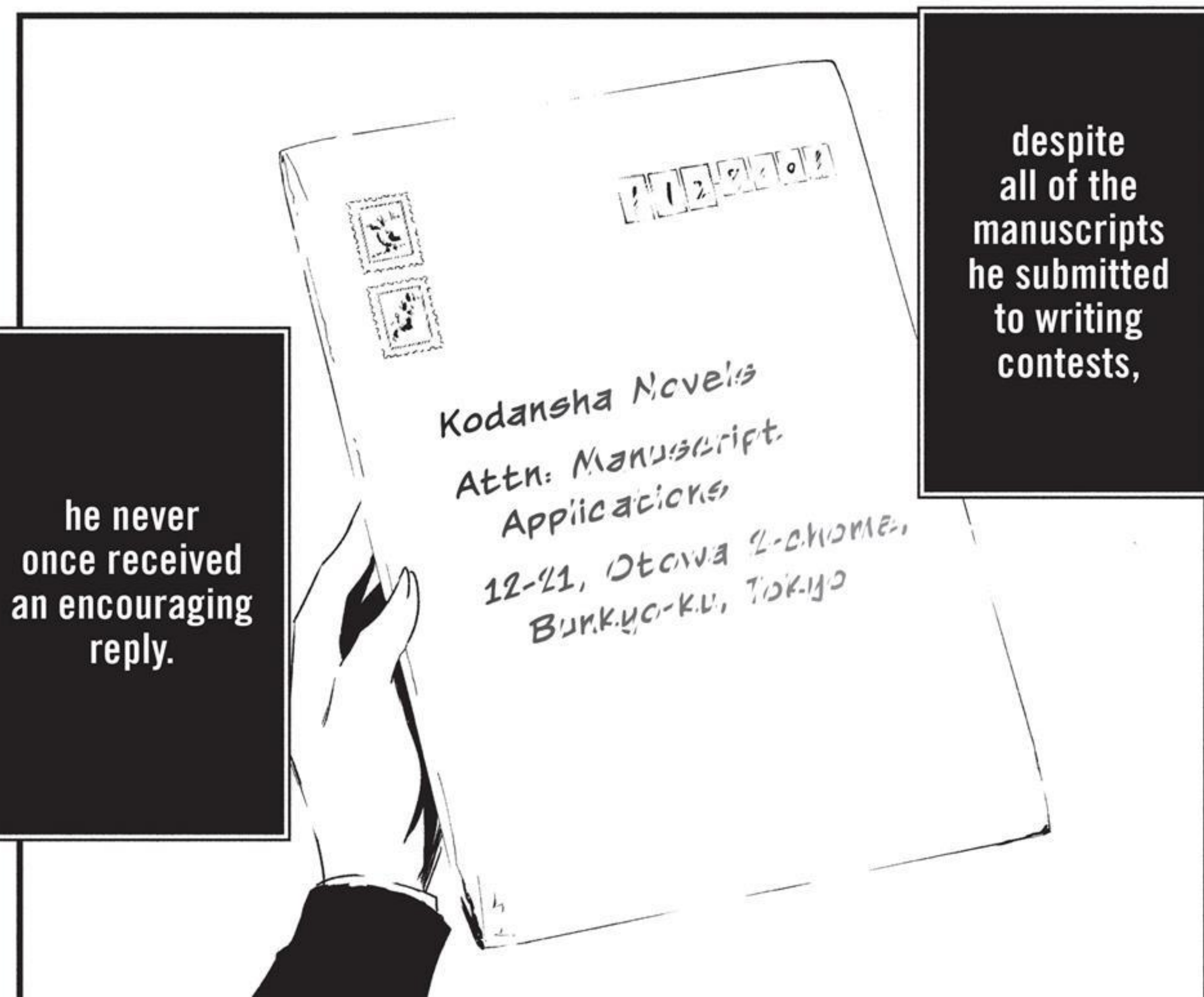
A young man  
whose only  
talent was  
writing.





And  
so,

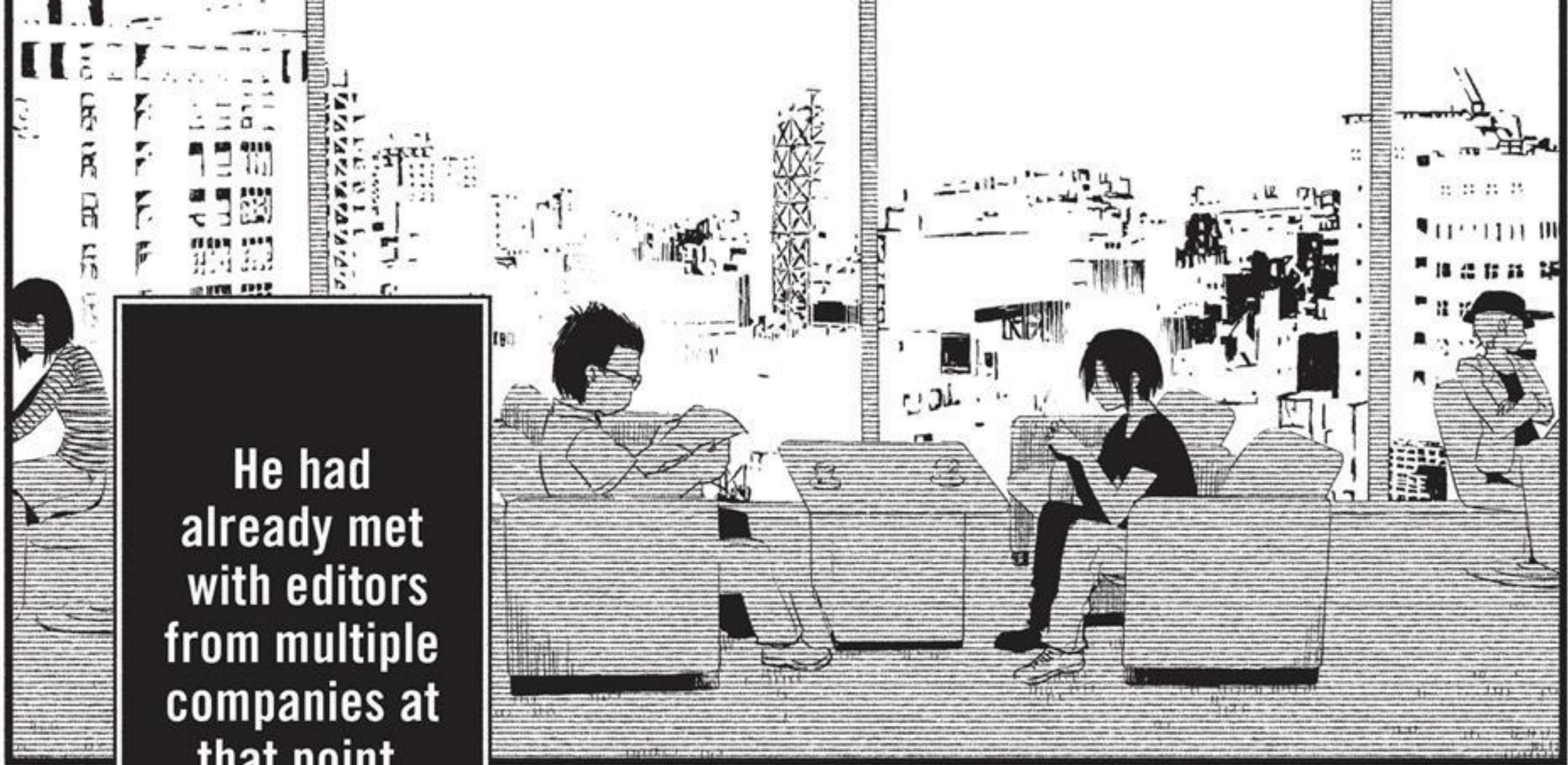
But at the  
same time,  
that isn't  
to say  
he was  
a talented  
novelist.



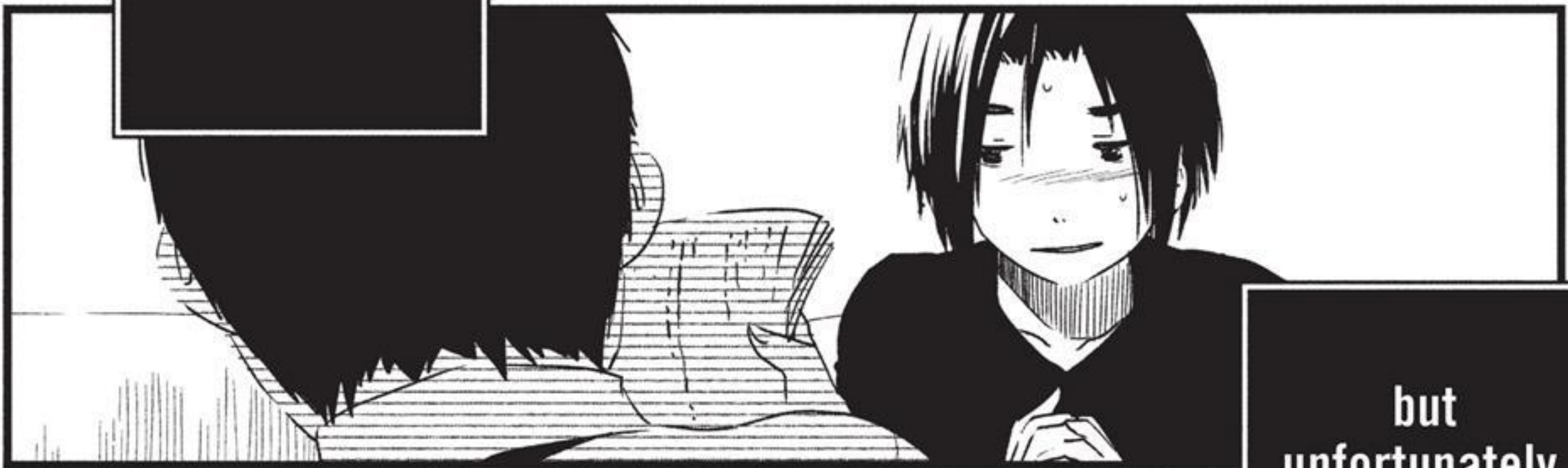
he never  
once received  
an encouraging  
reply.

despite  
all of the  
manuscripts  
he submitted  
to writing  
contests,





He had  
already met  
with editors  
from multiple  
companies at  
that point,



but  
unfortunately,  
those  
meetings  
never bore  
fruit.



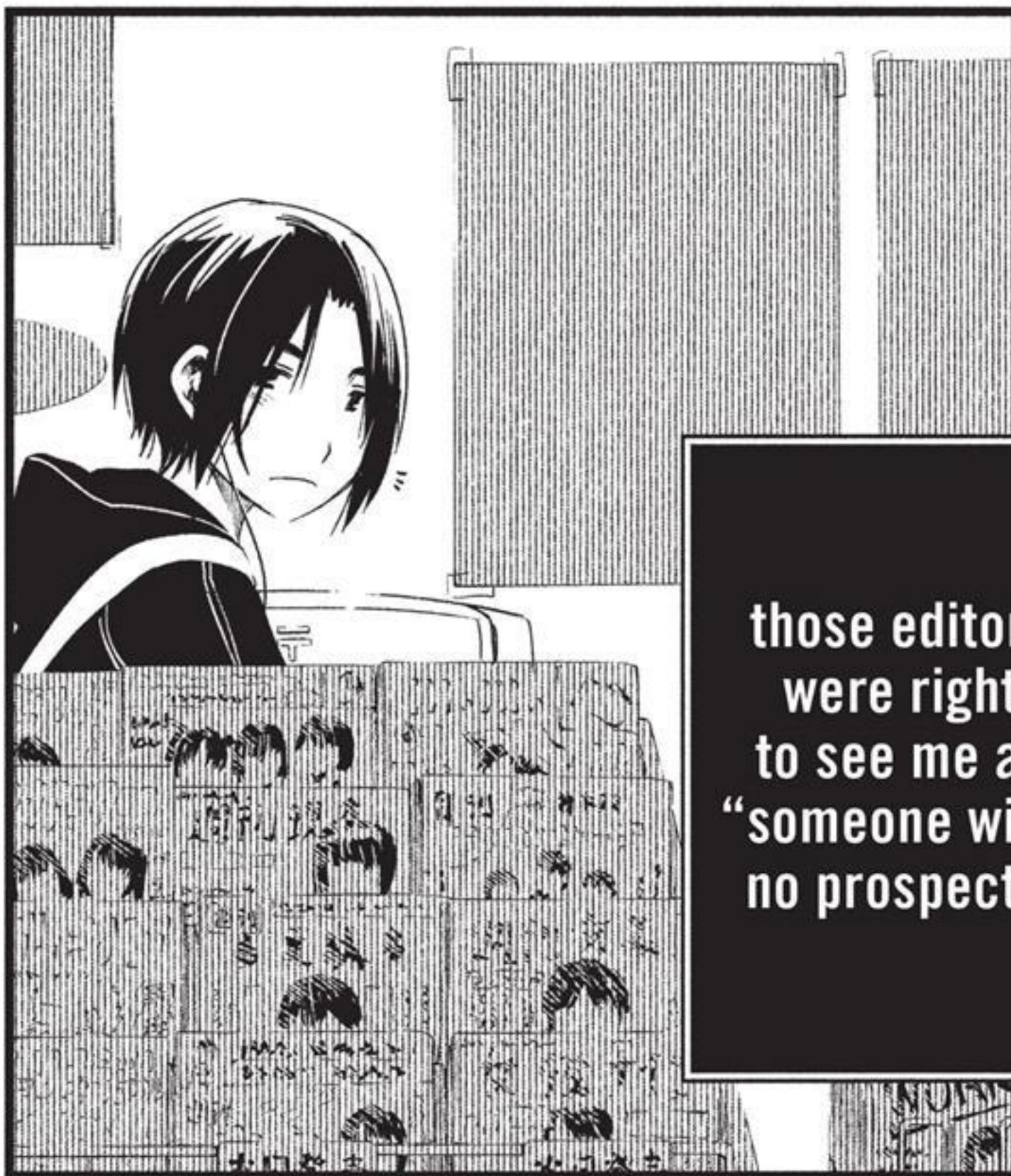
Maybe if  
he'd had  
better  
people  
skills,



he wouldn't  
have let  
those golden  
opportunities  
pass him by,  
but...







those editors  
were right  
to see me as  
“someone with  
no prospects.”



But  
I can see  
now that my  
work lacked  
a lot of  
things.



You know,  
those kinds  
of conceited  
thoughts.



At the time,  
of course, I  
wondered why  
they didn't  
understand  
just how  
entertaining  
my work  
was.





They  
weren't  
novels  
by an  
author.

They were  
novels by  
an *aspiring*  
author.

SHAAAA

+

Even  
if I could  
somehow  
close my  
eyes and  
ignore  
that fact,

for some  
reason,  
at the  
end of  
the day,



I think those  
(attempts at)  
novels just  
didn't have  
any sparkle.

↑

↑



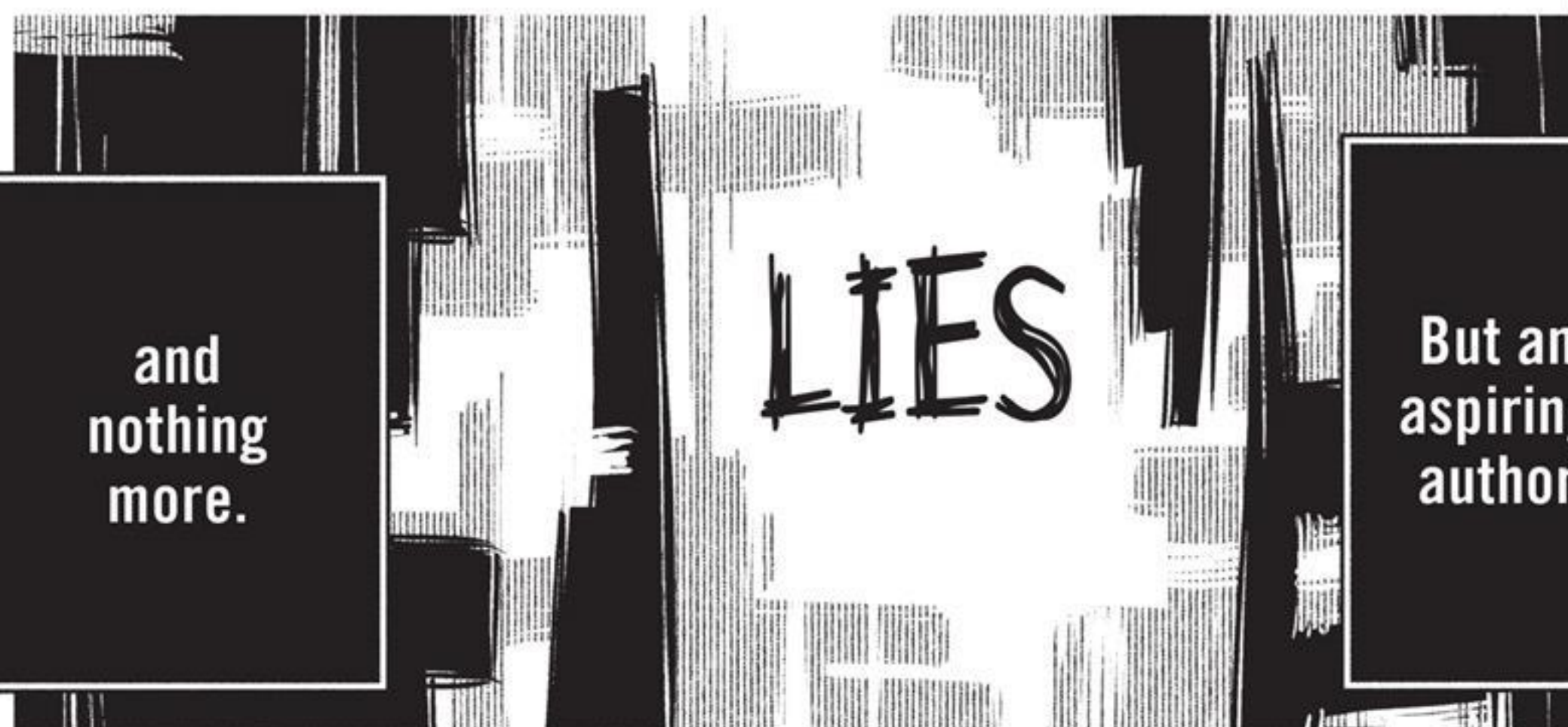


The way  
I see it,  
that's what  
separates  
the two.

a  
creator  
of  
tales.



Okay  
then, you  
might ask  
me, what's  
the difference  
between an  
author and  
an aspiring  
author? Well,  
an author is



and  
nothing  
more.

LIES

An  
author  
creates  
tales.  
But an  
aspiring  
author

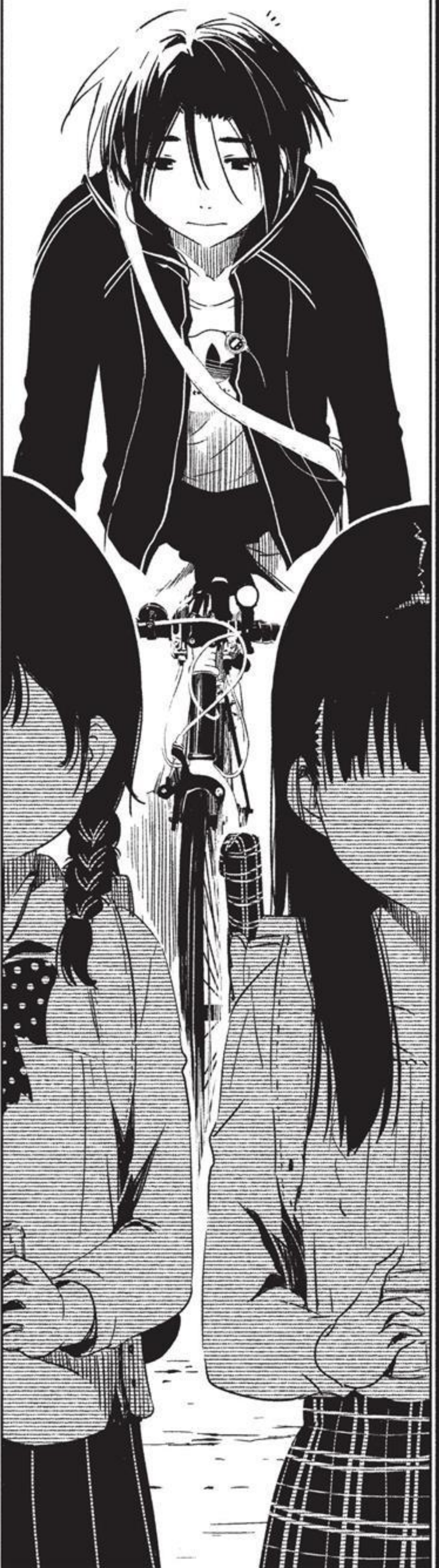
Just a  
yarn-  
spinning  
blowhard.



At the  
time,  
I was just  
a liar.



Which is why I think



were it not for that event taking place,



I honestly never would have amounted to anything.

And that's why

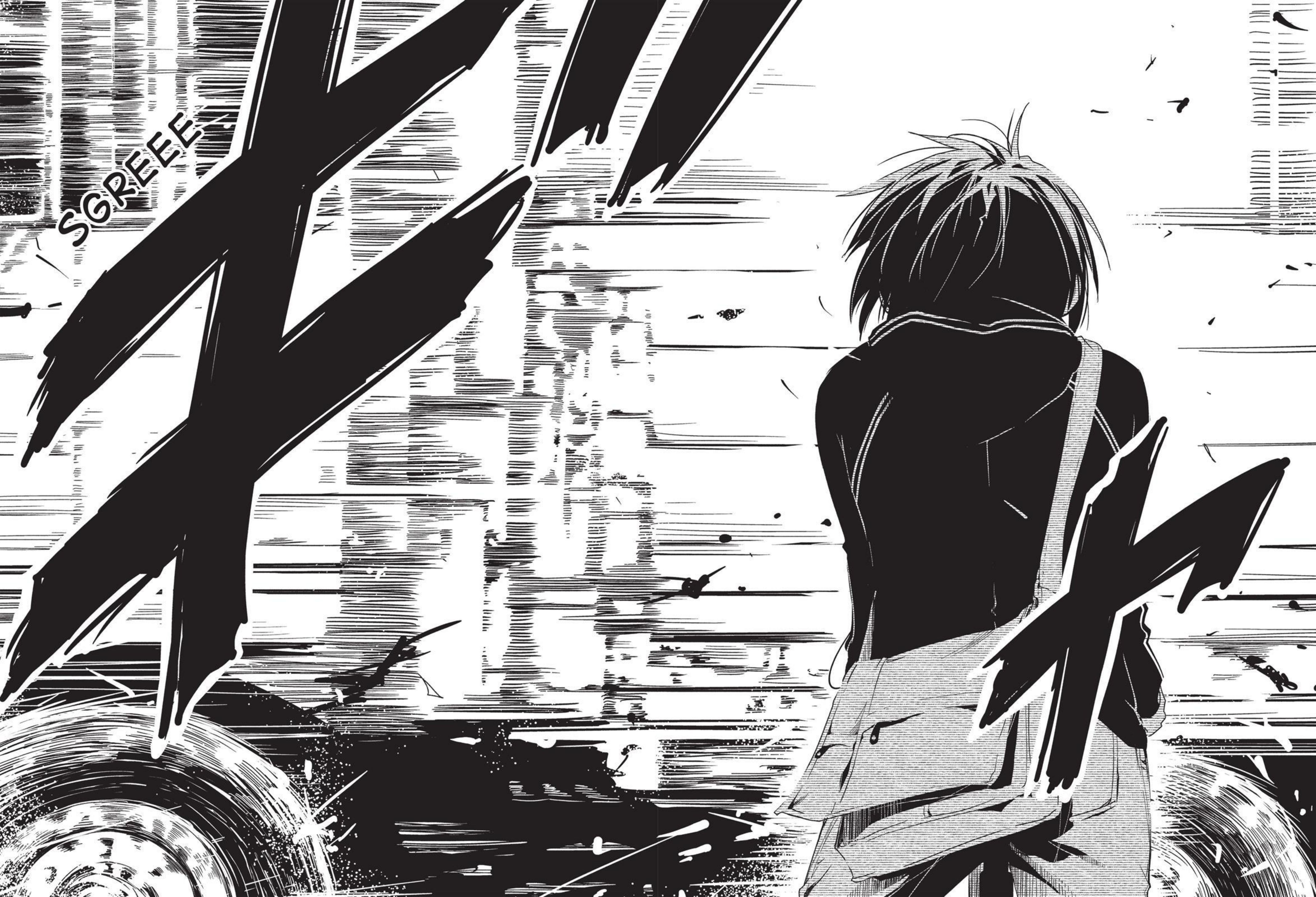


I think I need to thank her.



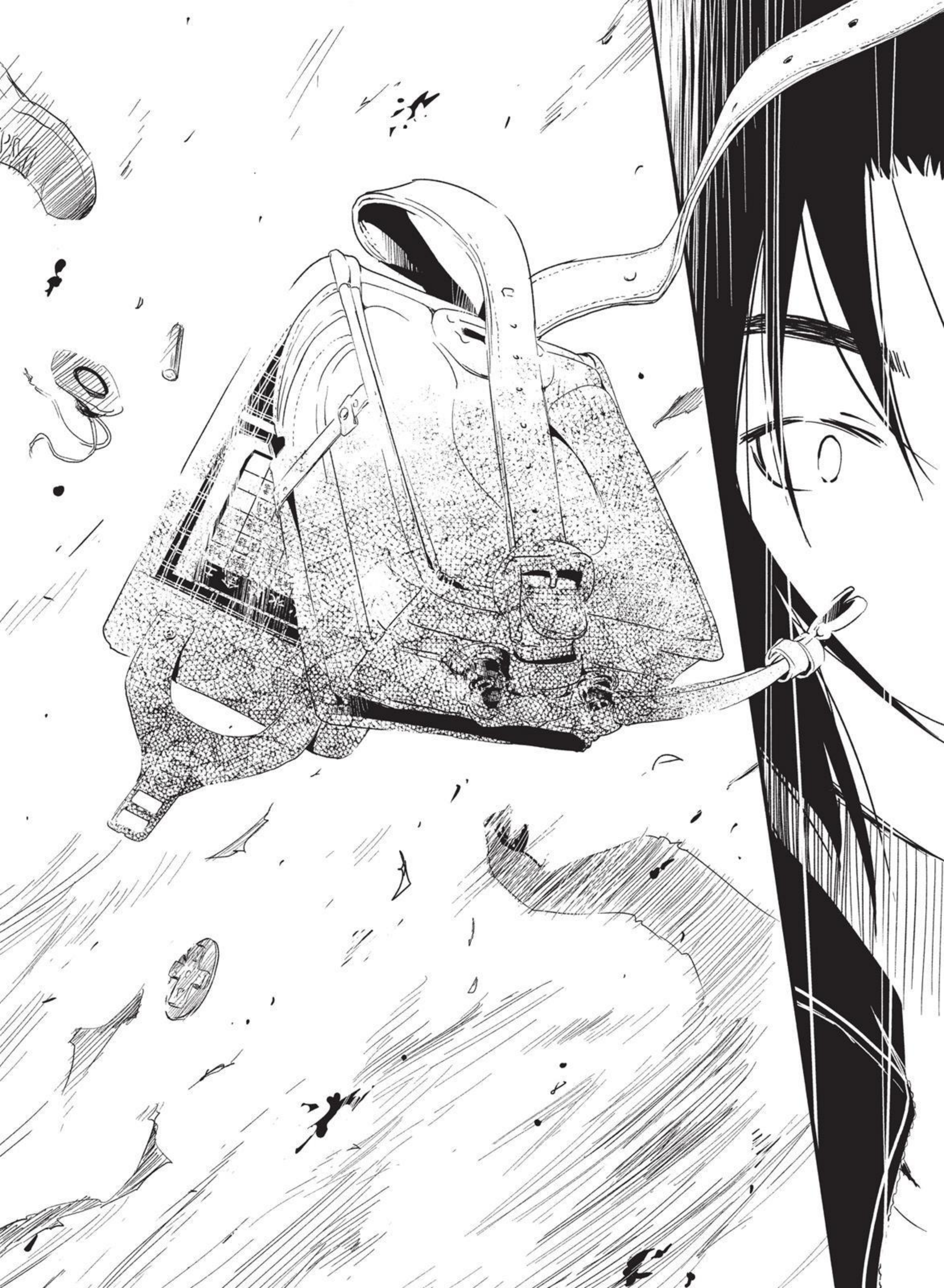
That child, that girl.





SCREEEE









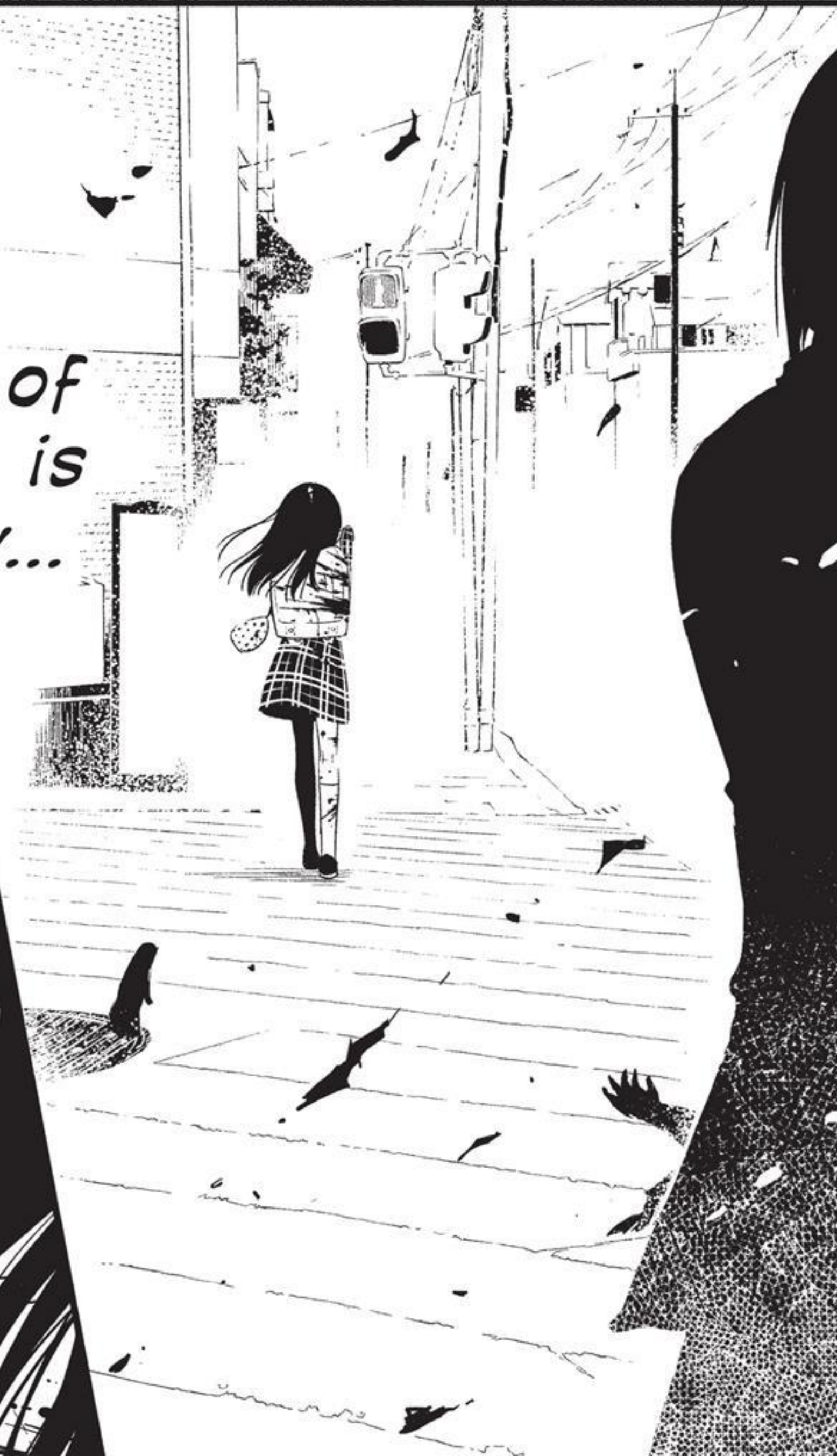
Both  
of  
them

were  
struck



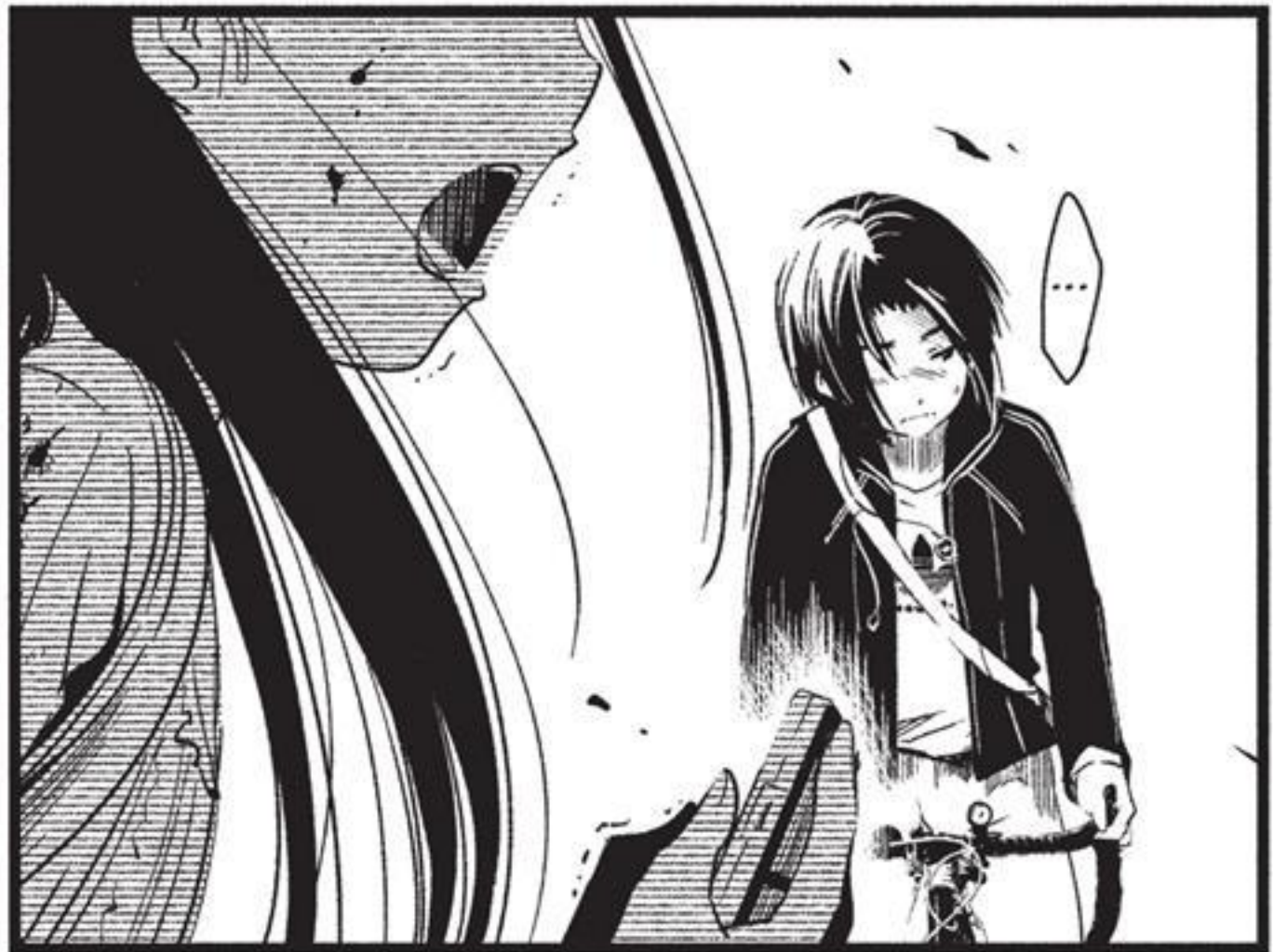
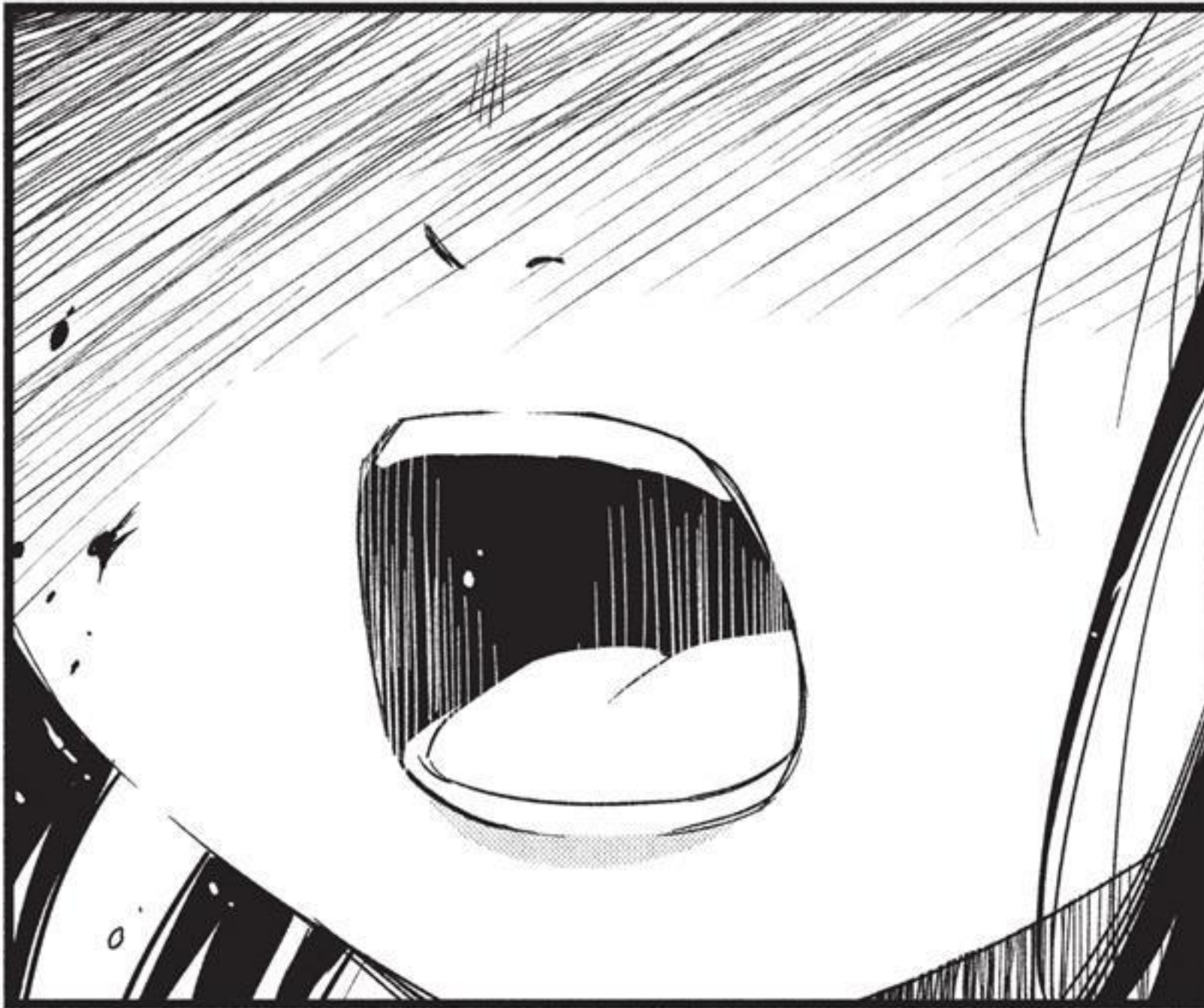
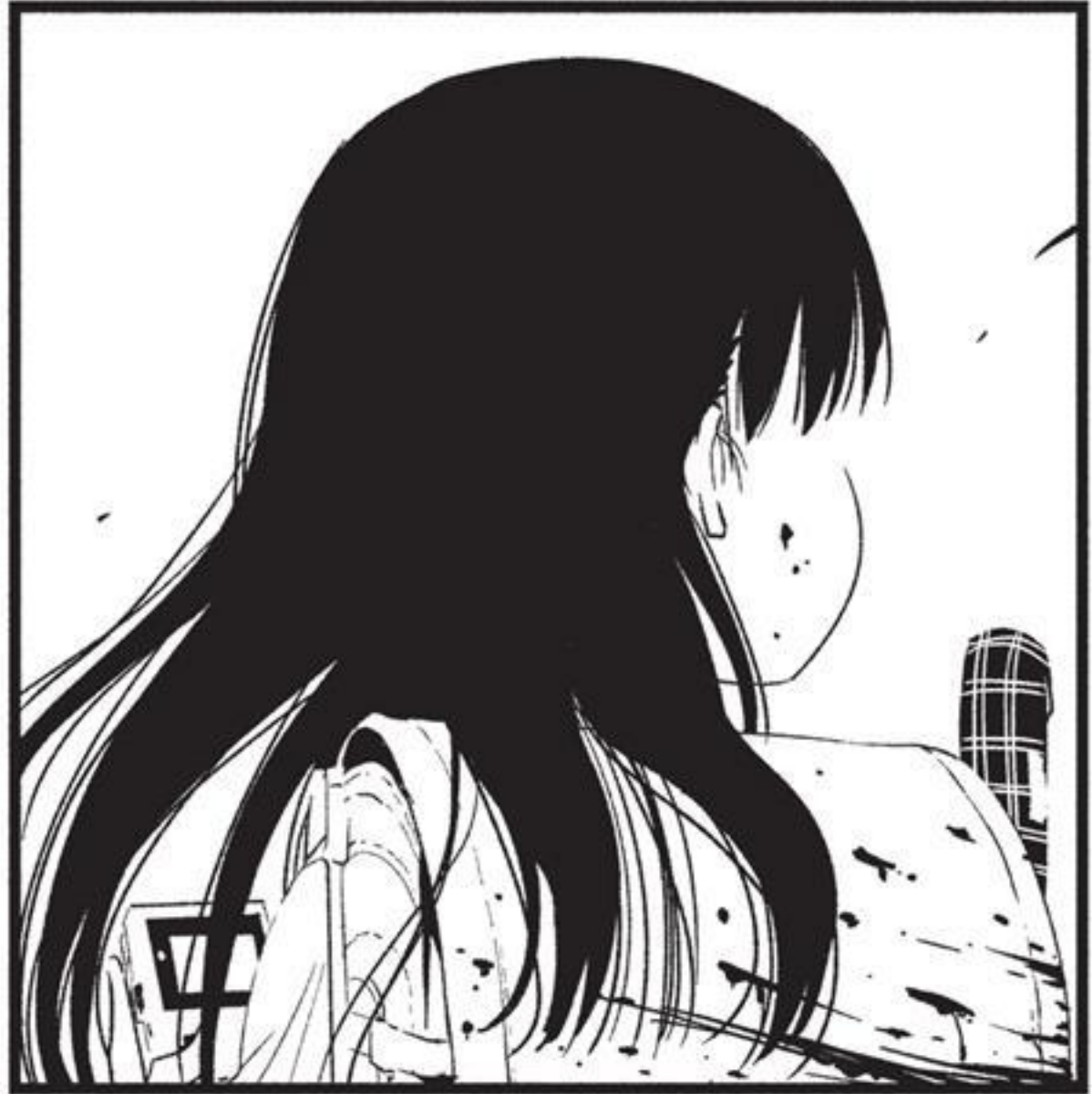
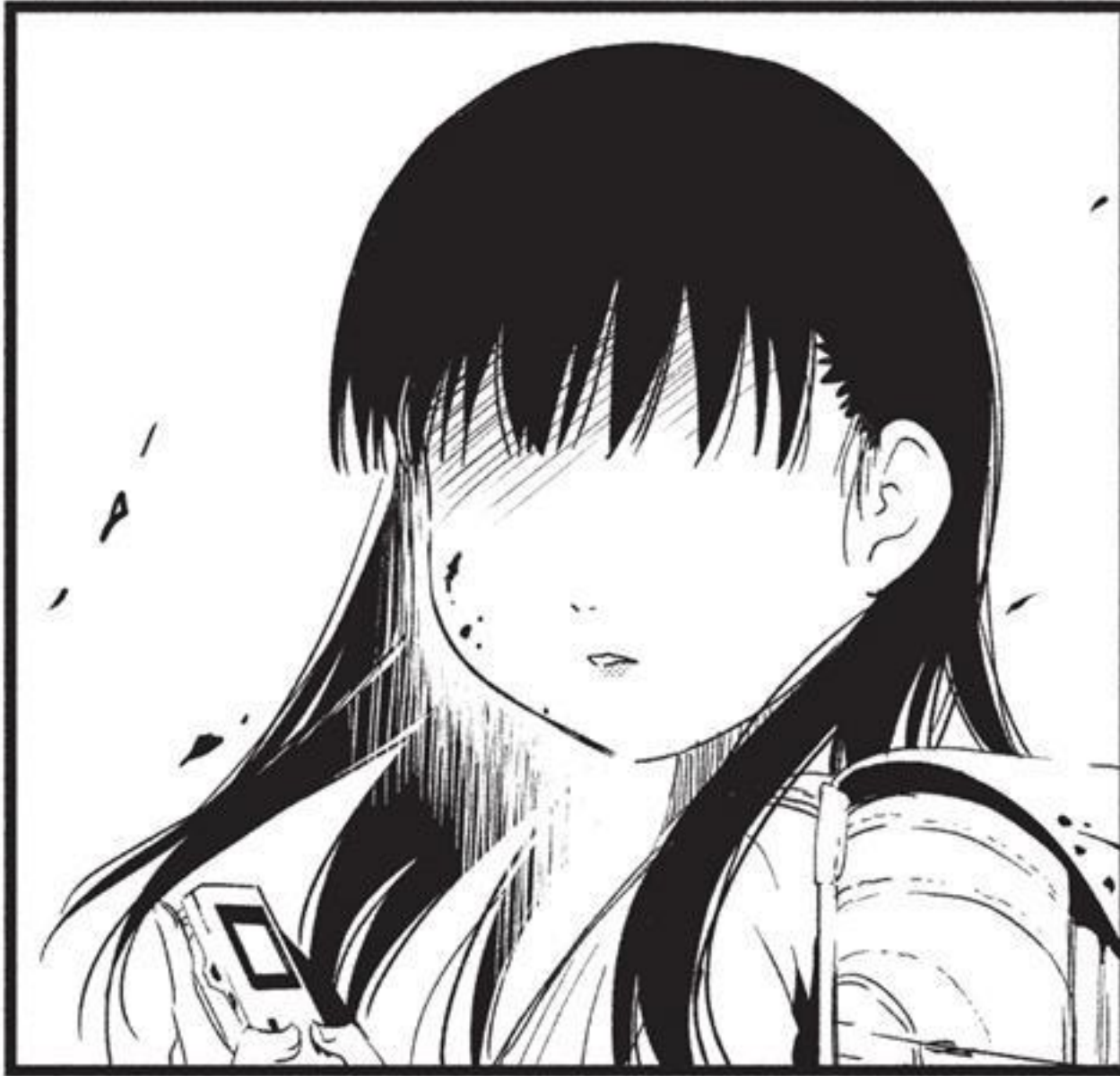


One of  
them is  
okay...



One of  
them...









What  
...?

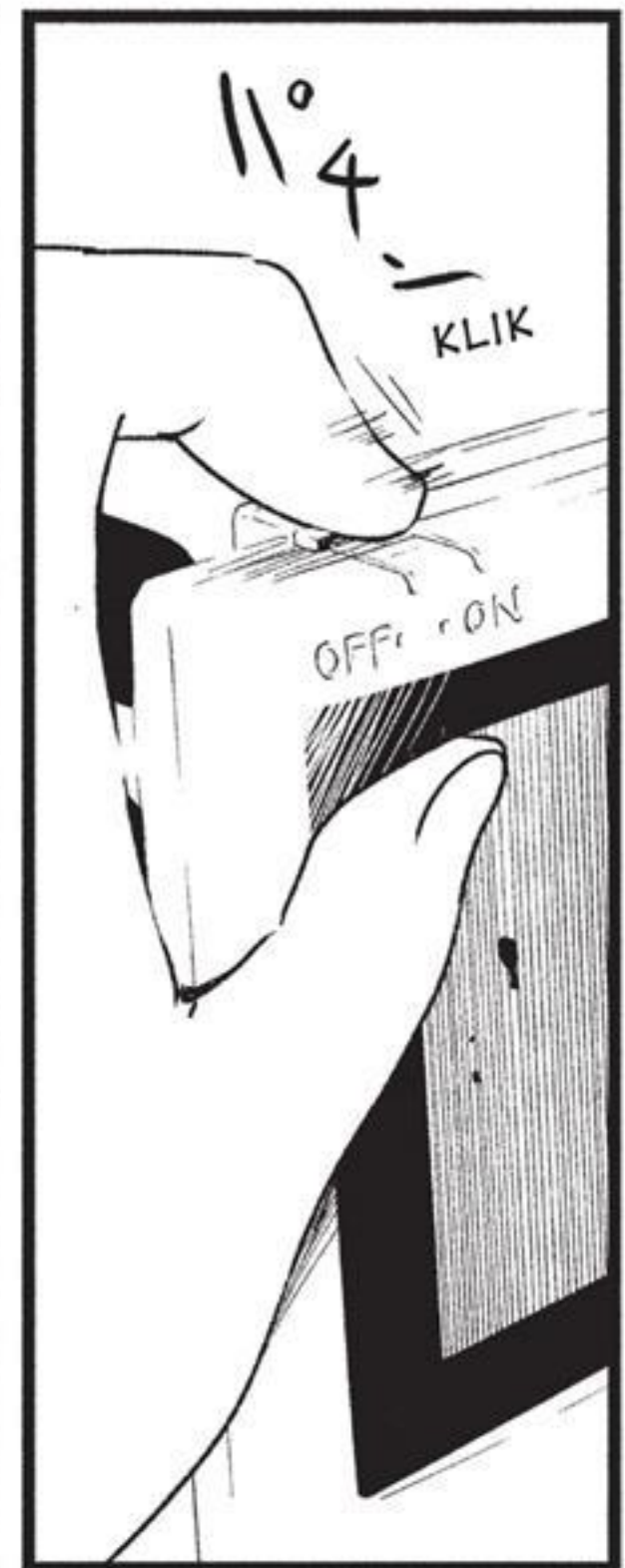
BADUMM

Wh...  
Why  
...?

















ア

ア

ア

ア

ハ

...I  
saw  
it...

ア

That  
girl  
, ...

ハ





made  
sure  
to  
save  
first

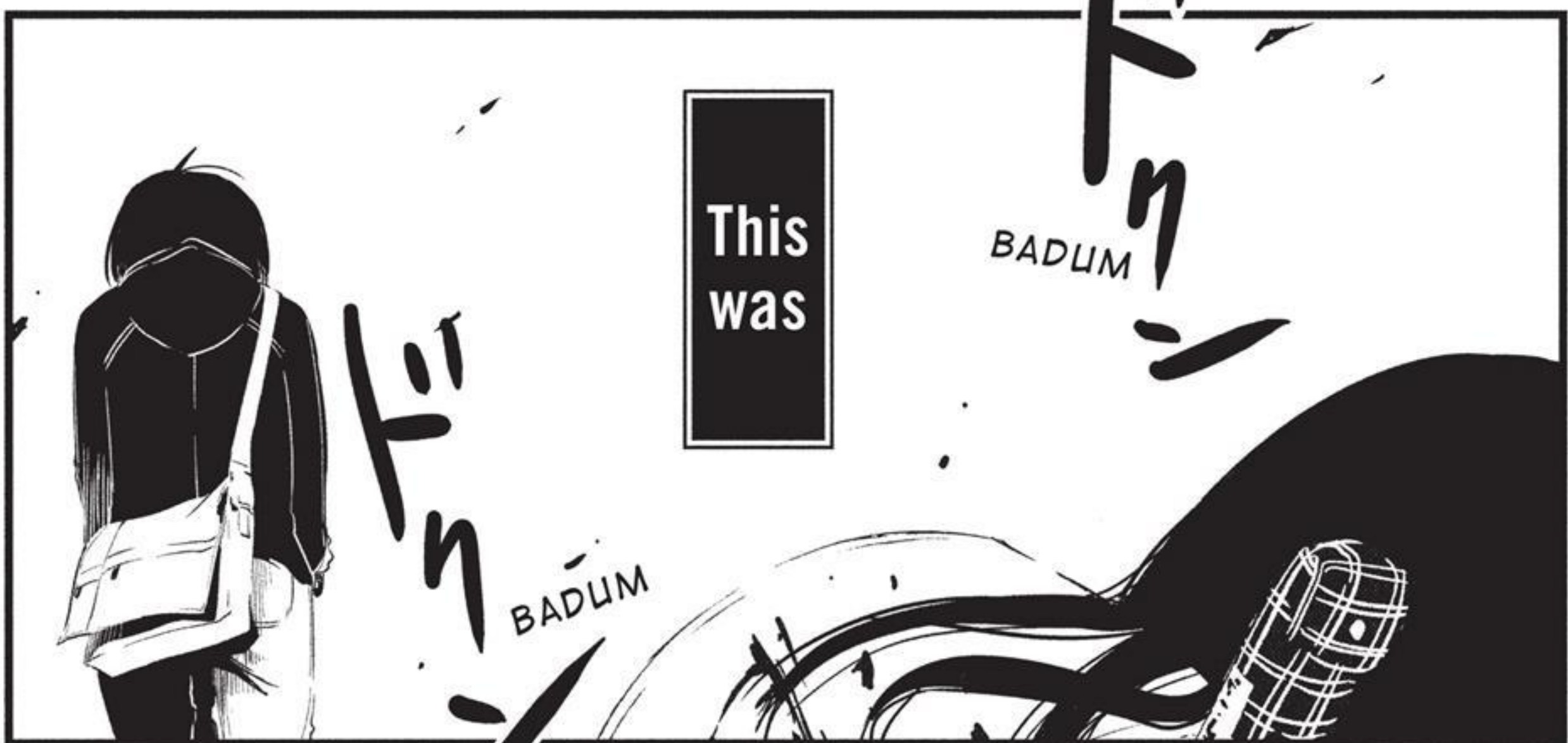
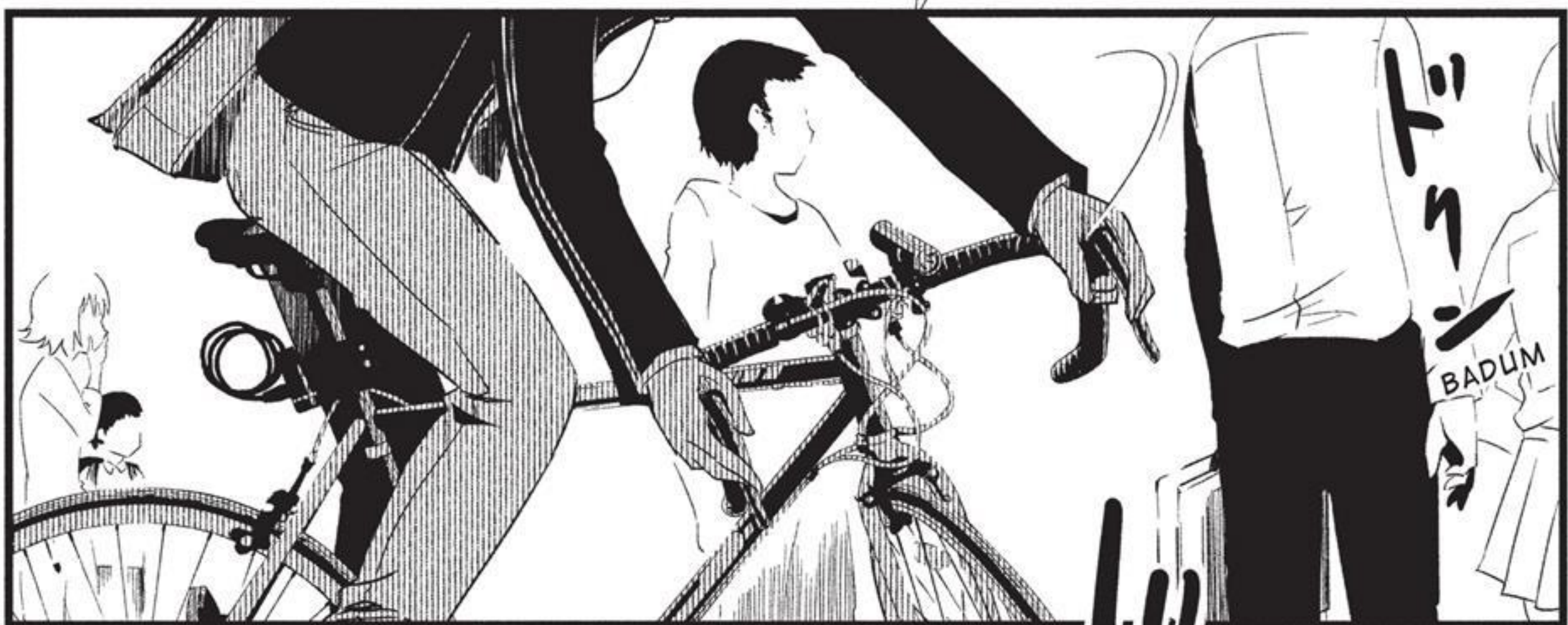
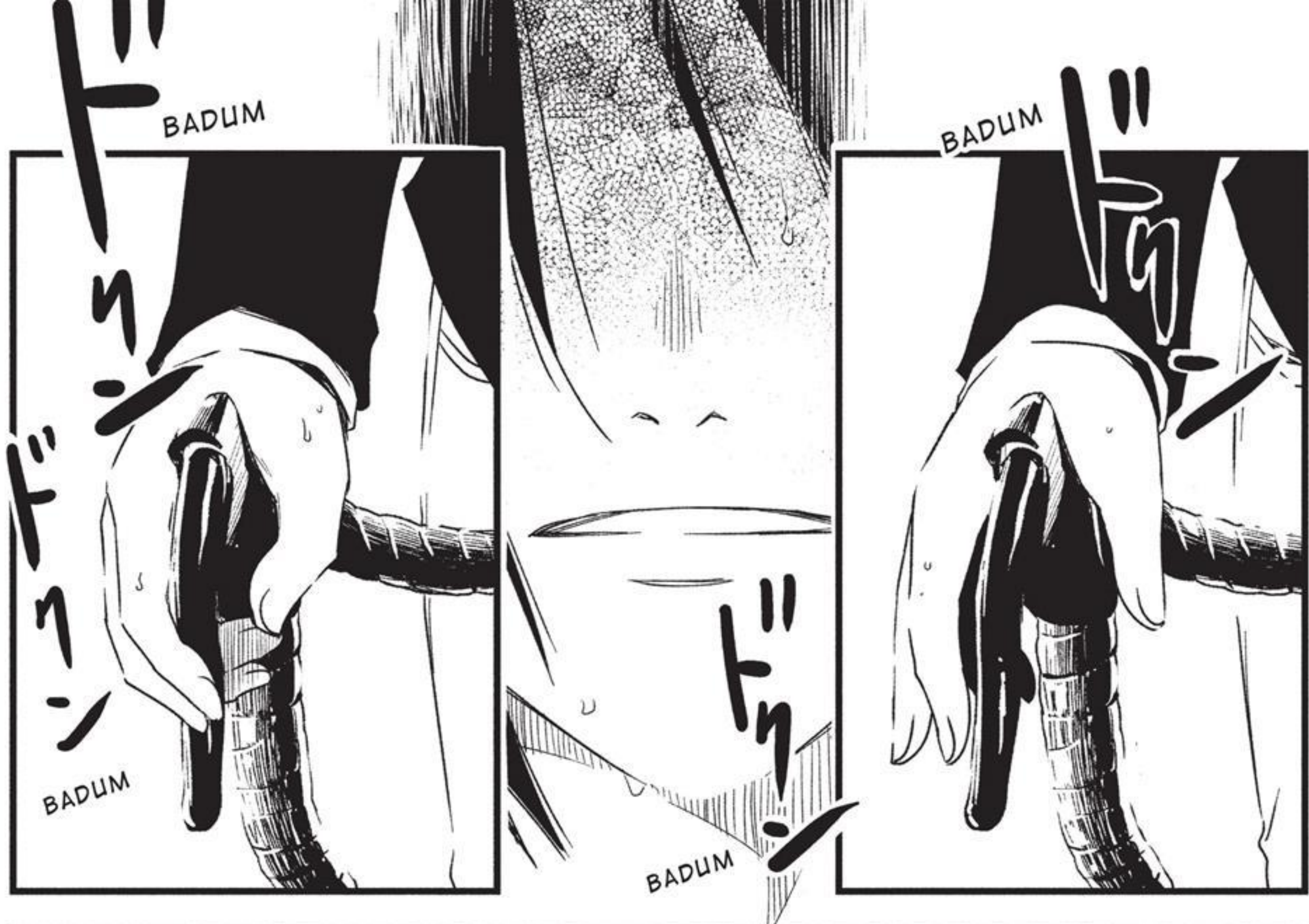
ooo

and  
then  
ran  
to her  
friend  
oooo!!



She  
took the  
game  
she was  
playing...







BADUM

the  
first  
time



ド  
ン

BADUM

U  
and I  
met.



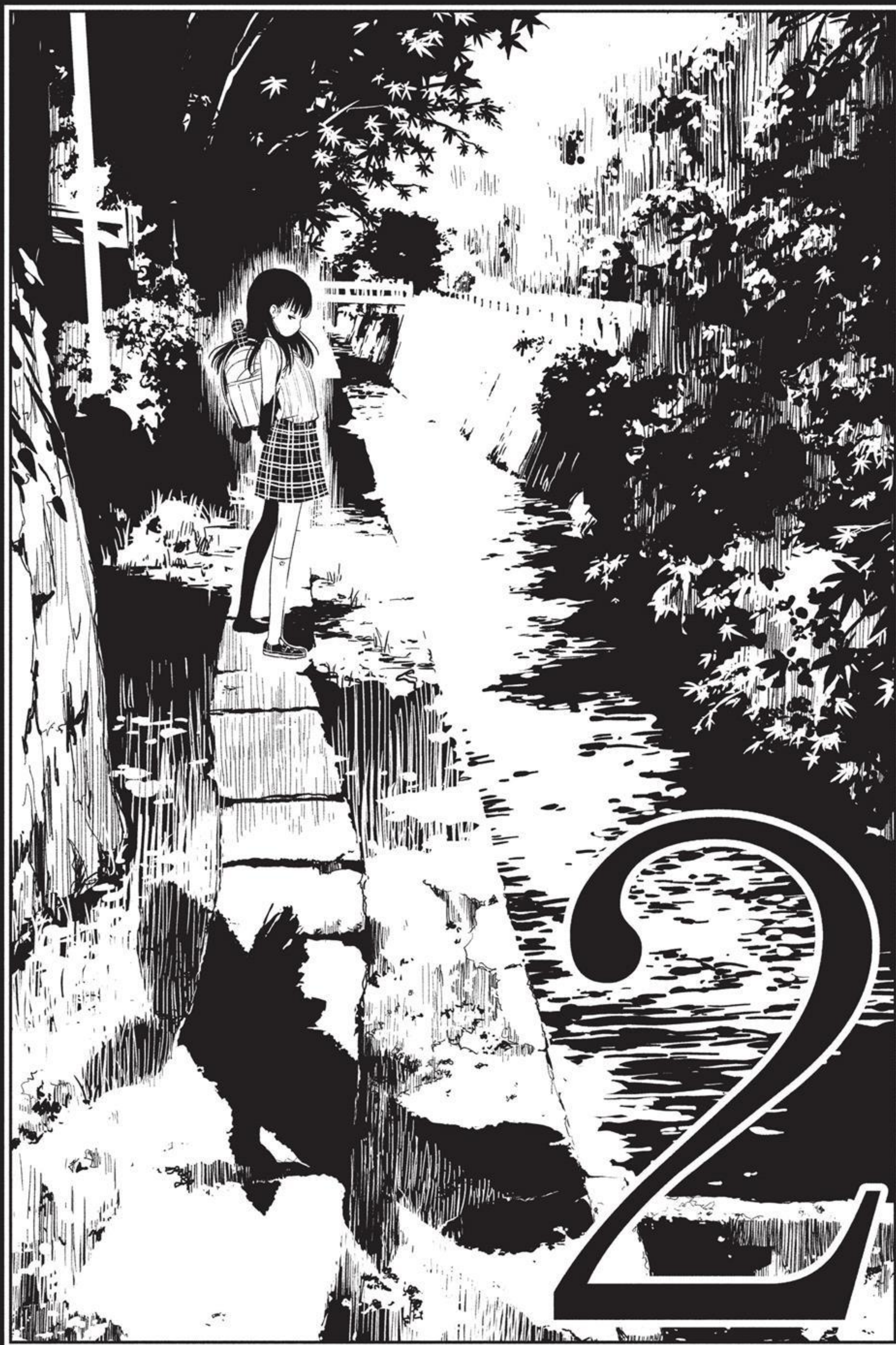




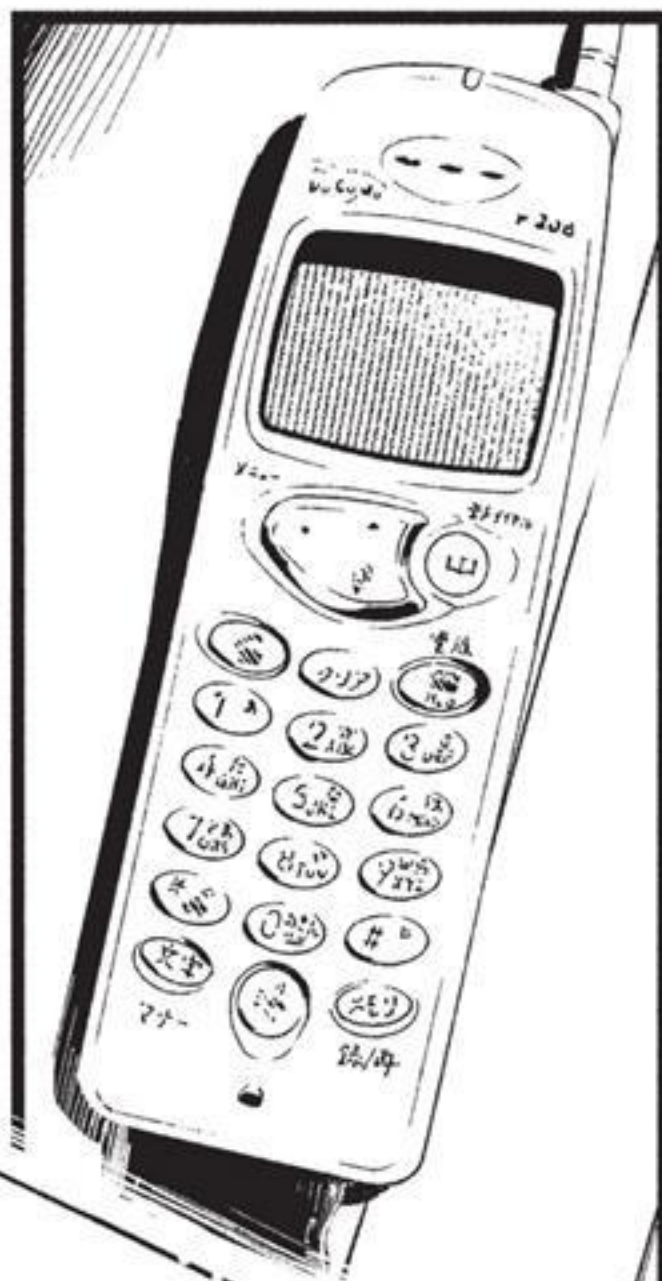










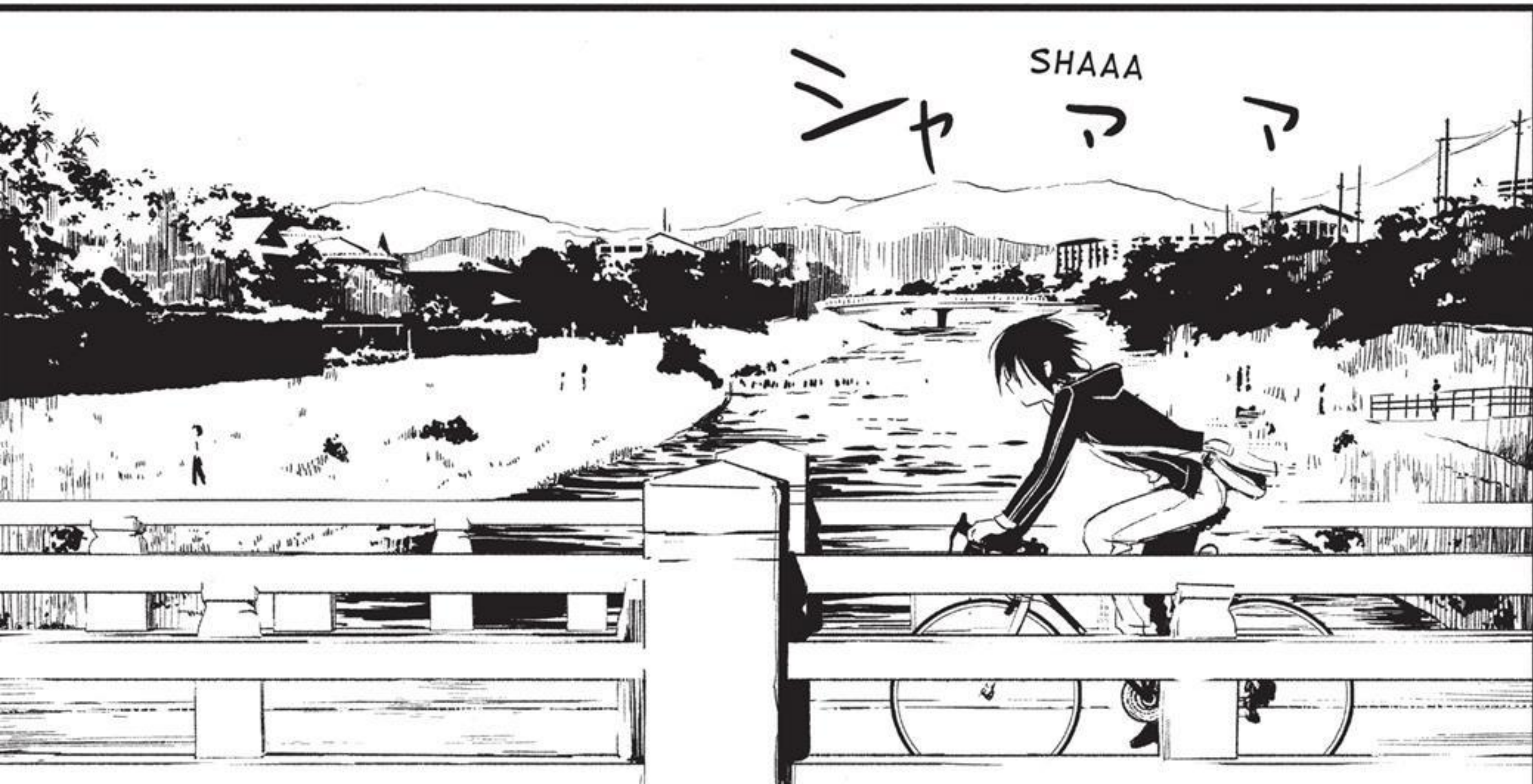
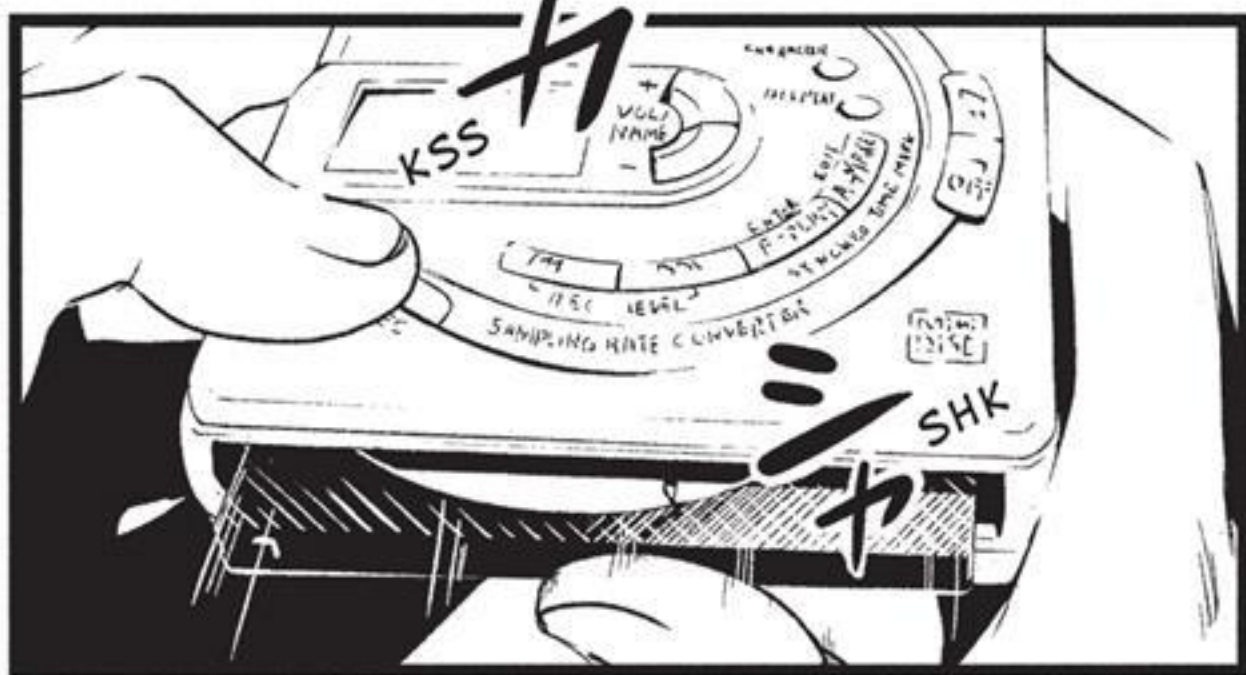




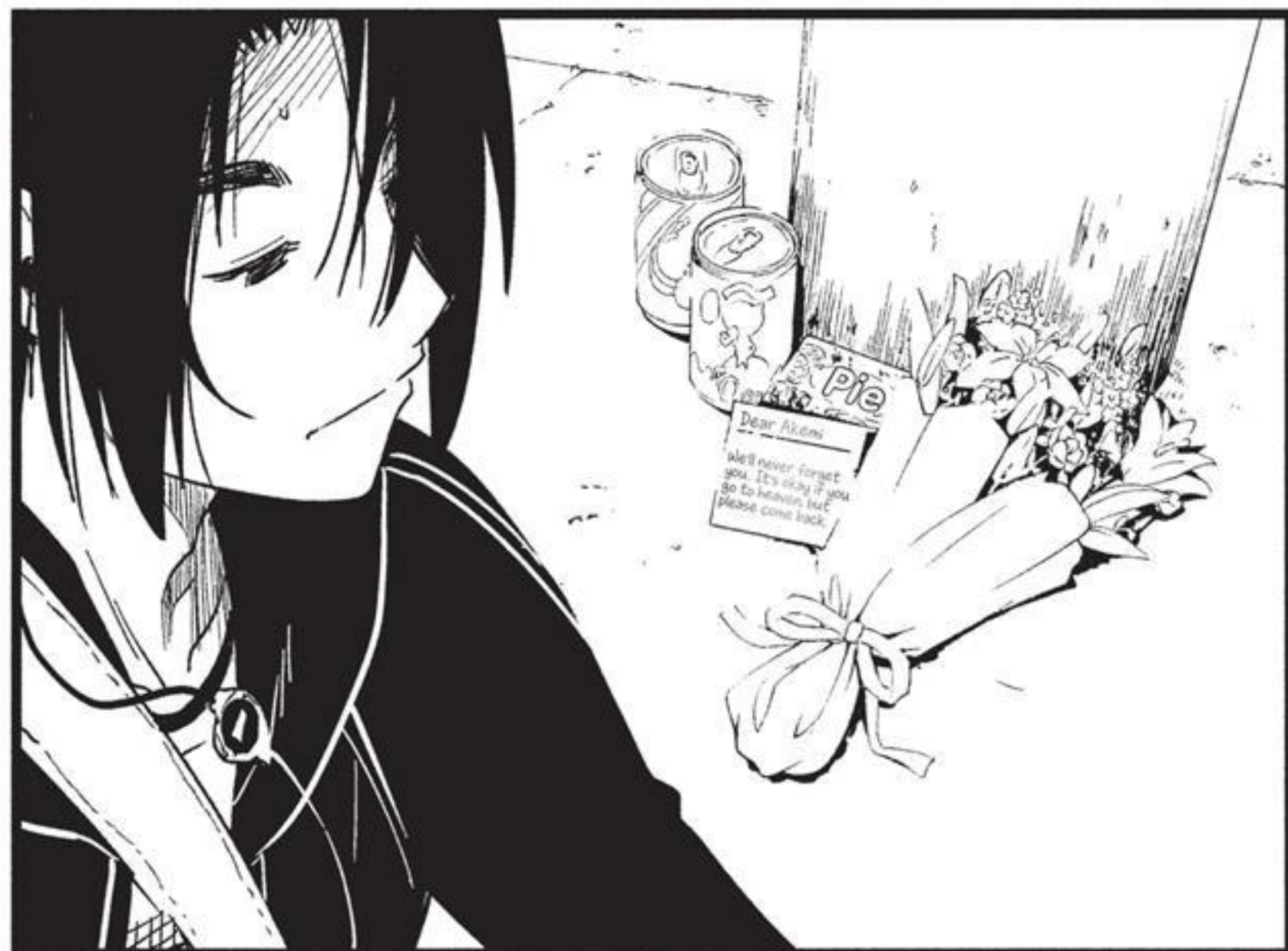


I guess  
I really  
gotta get  
back...

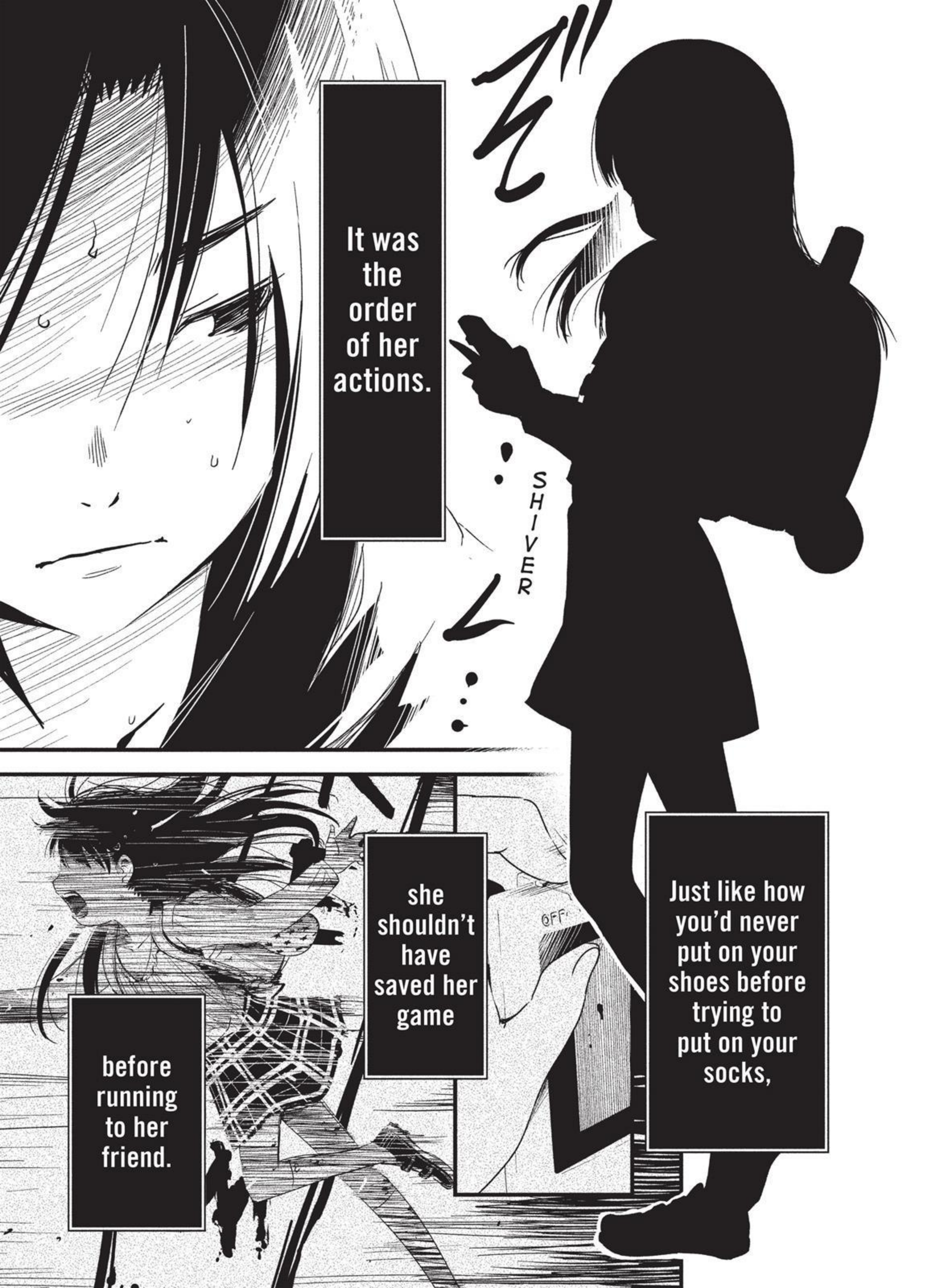
to  
class  
...











It was  
the  
order  
of her  
actions.

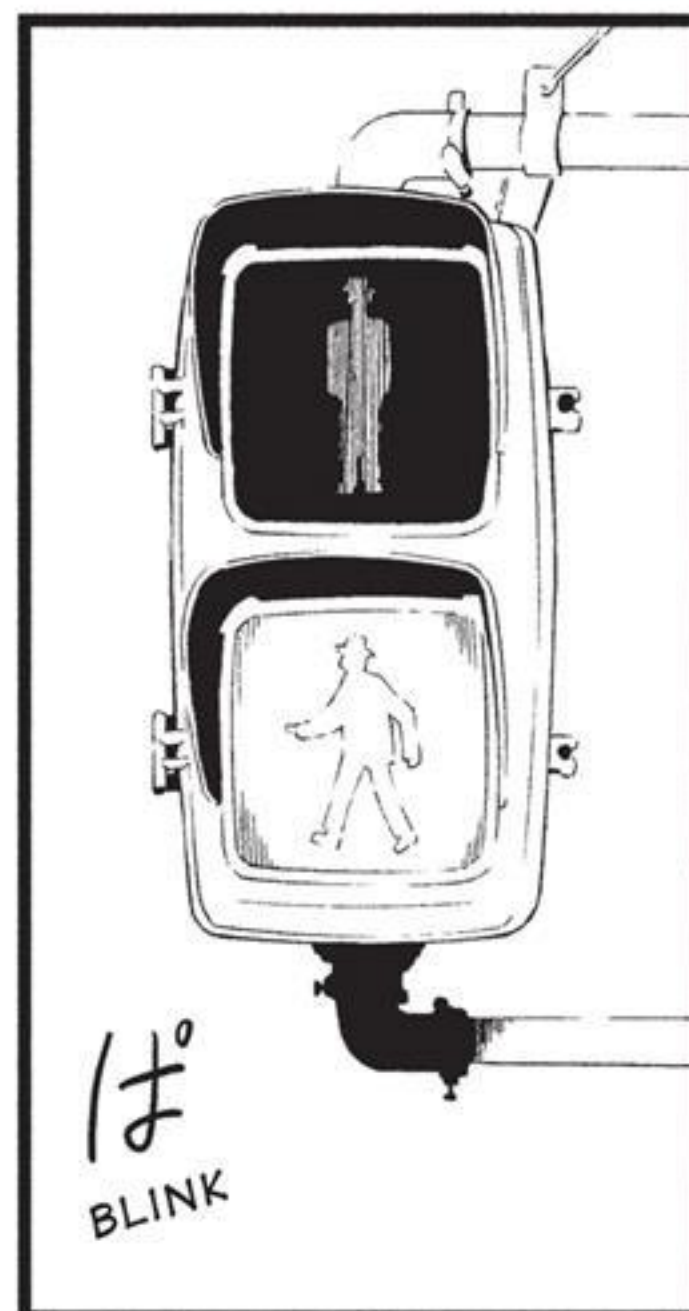
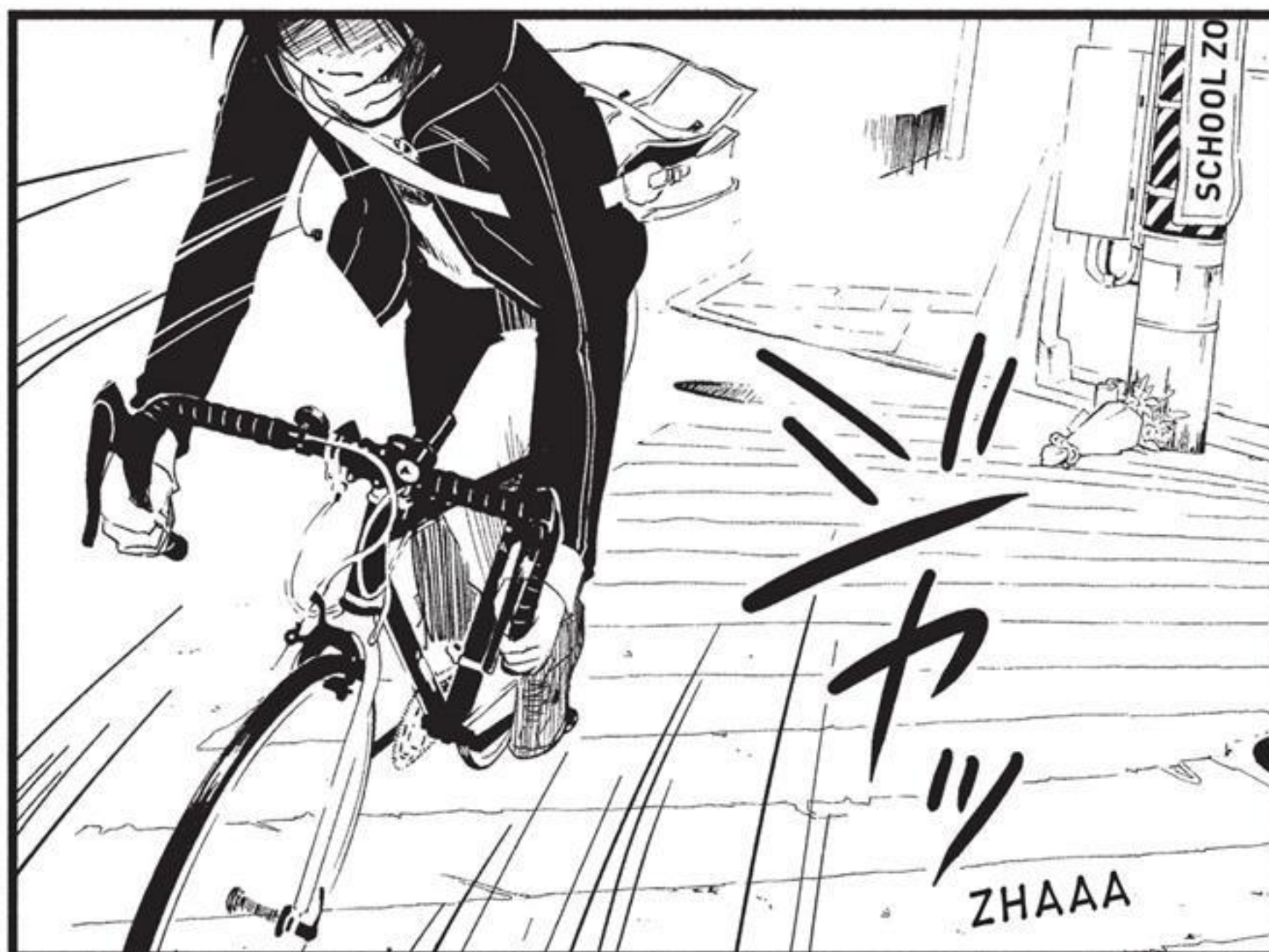
S  
H  
I  
V  
E  
R

she  
shouldn't  
have  
saved her  
game

before  
running  
to her  
friend.

Just like how  
you'd never  
put on your  
shoes before  
trying to  
put on your  
socks,





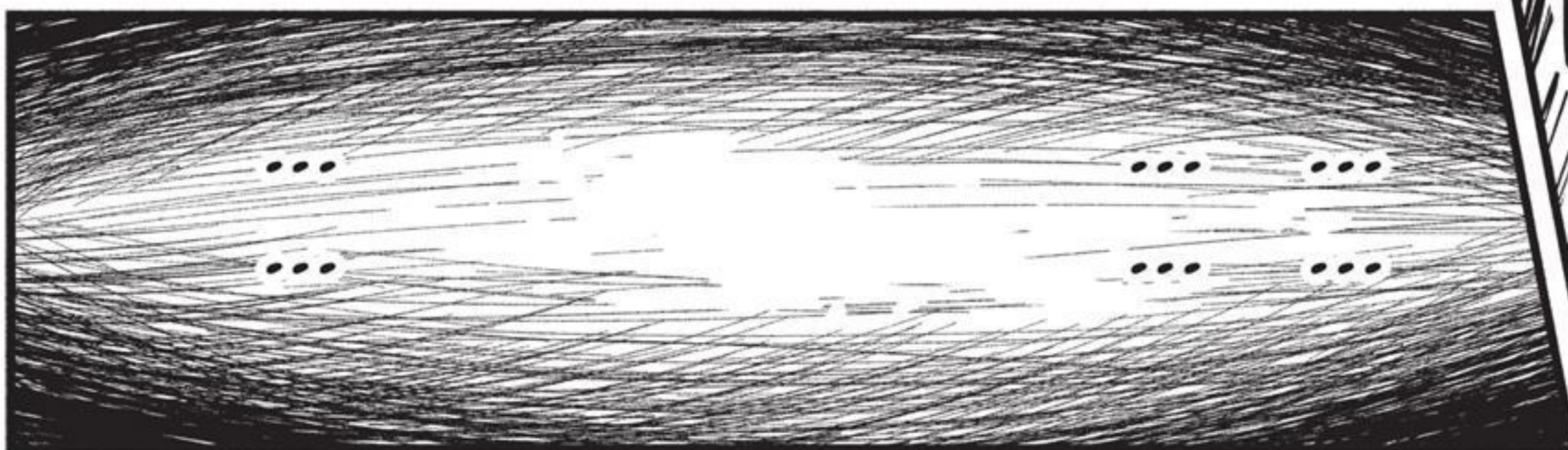




SLAMM

Huh?





WHUMP

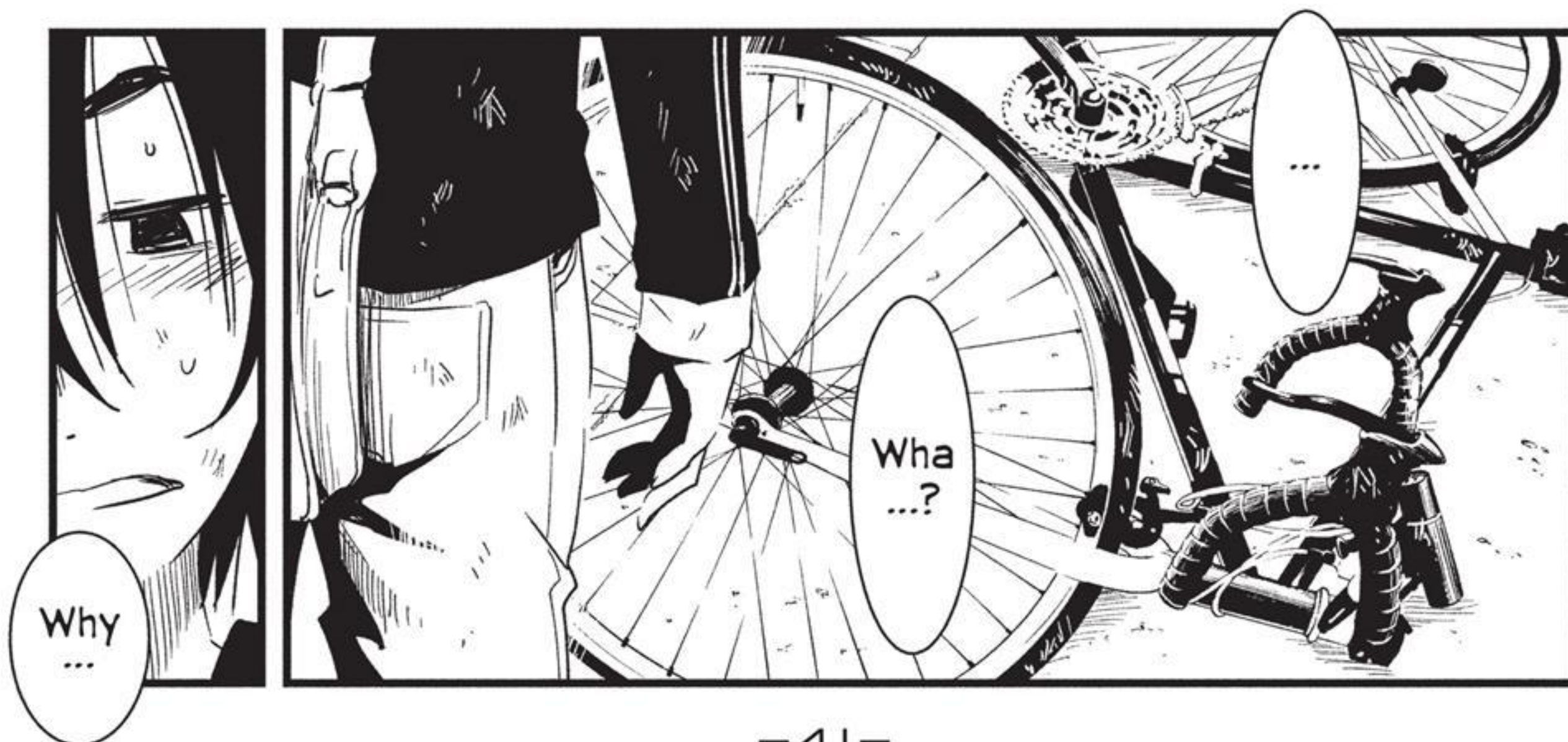
Huh?

What...

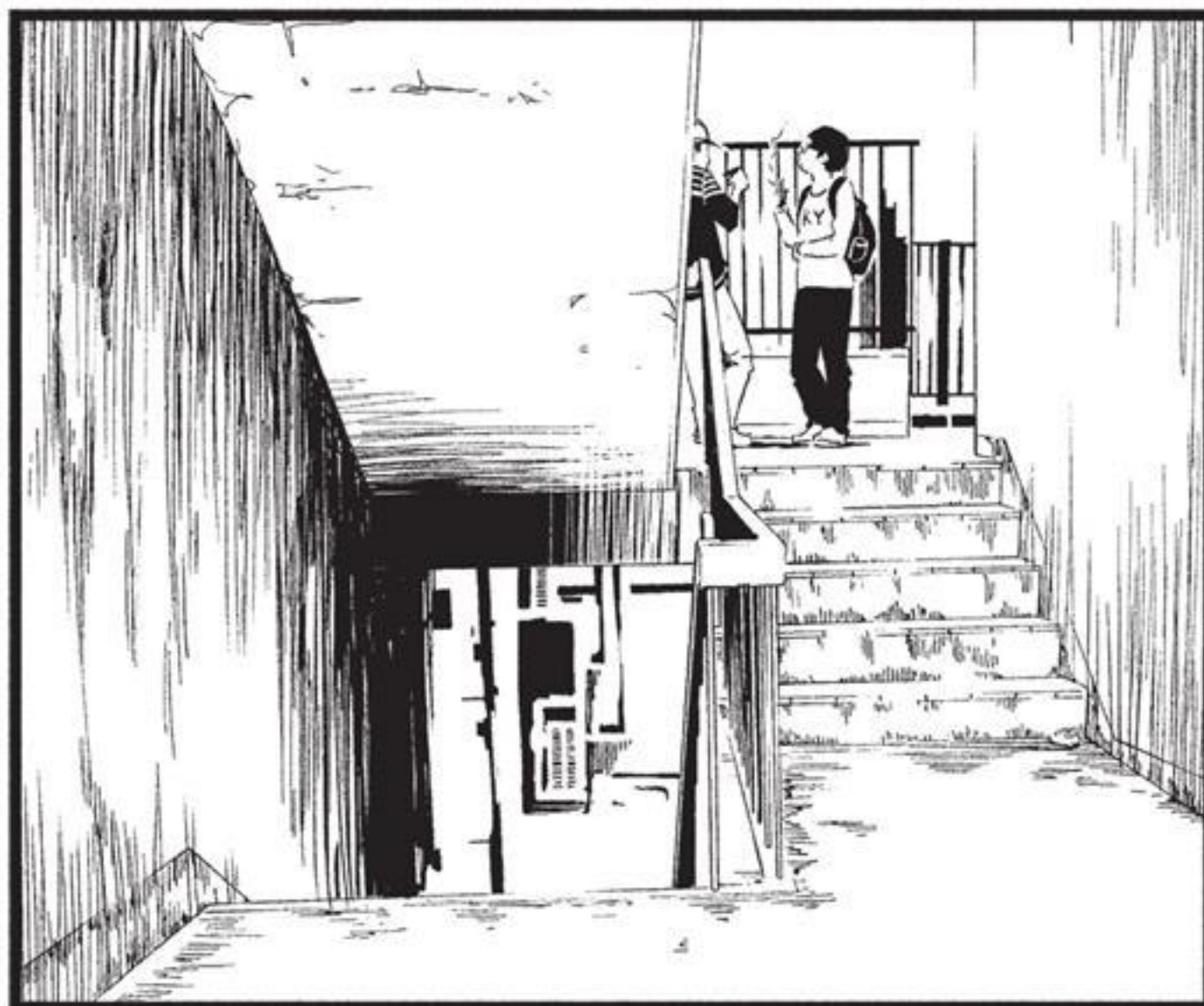
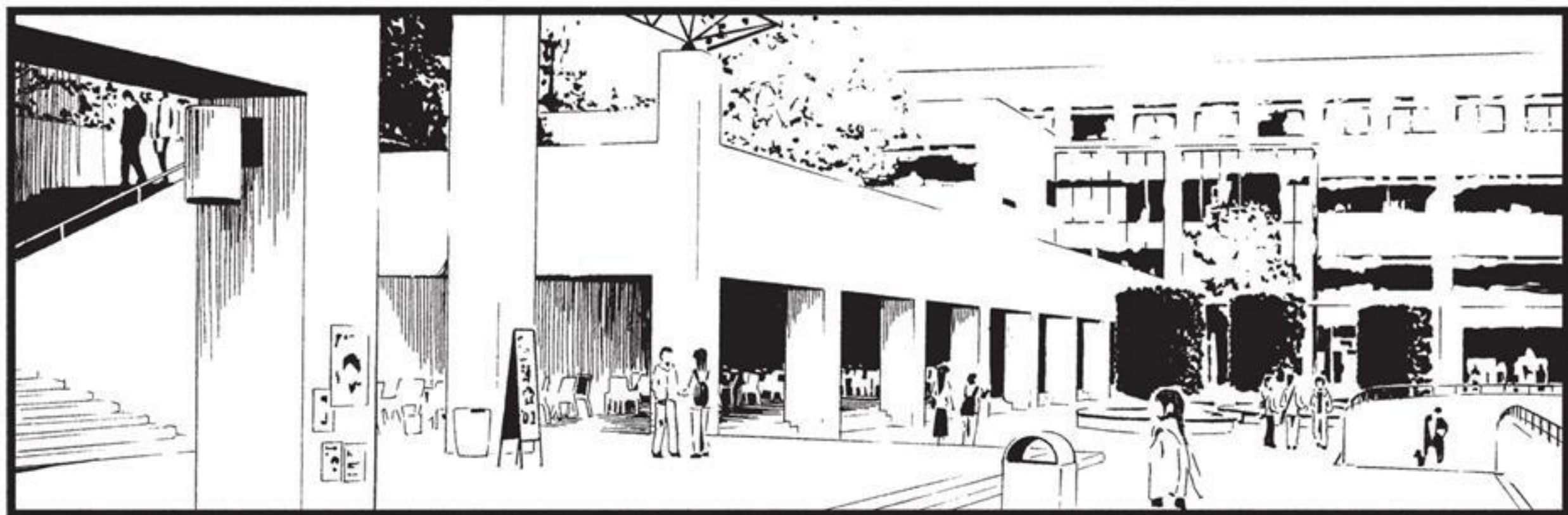
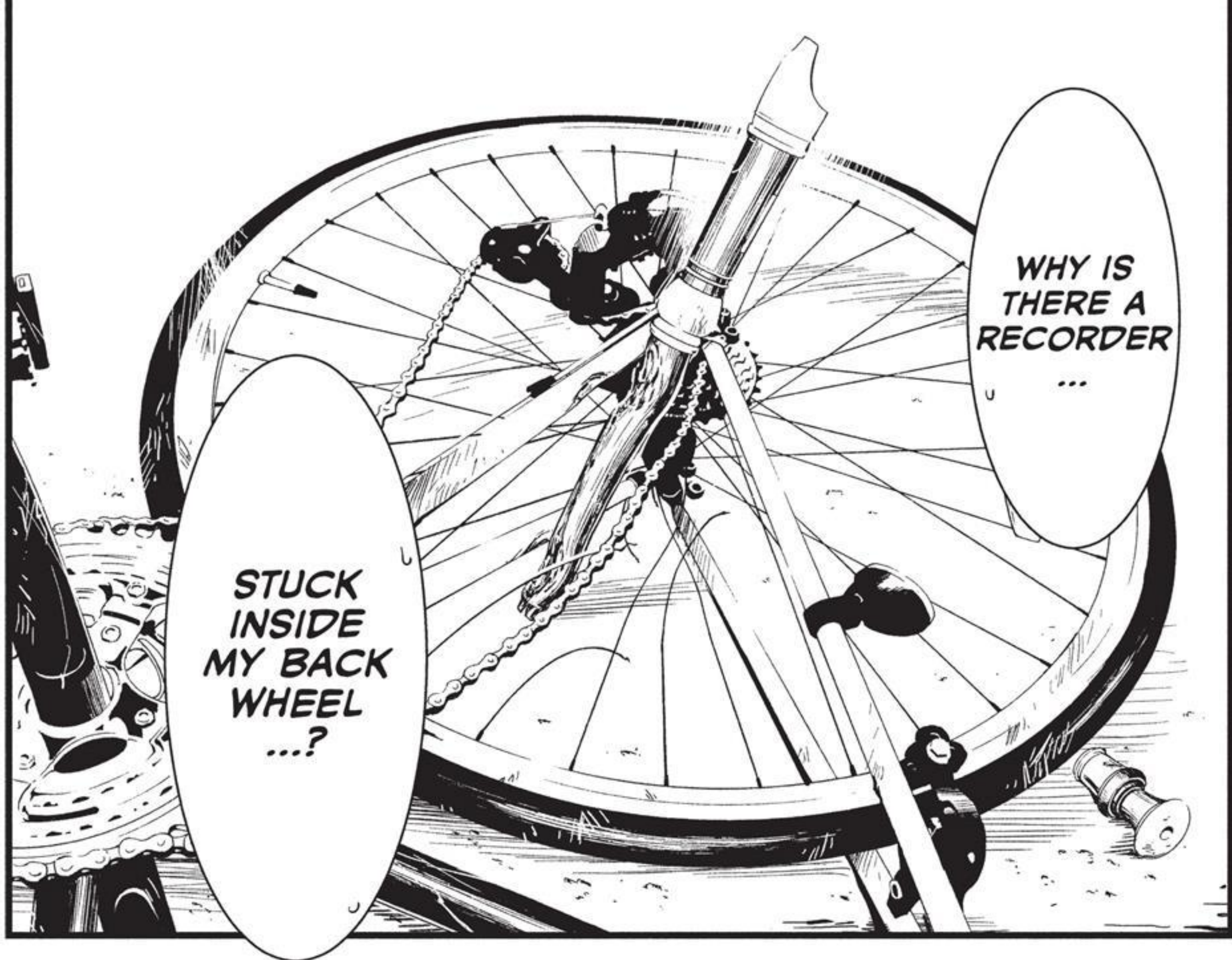
just  
happened  
...?

GASP

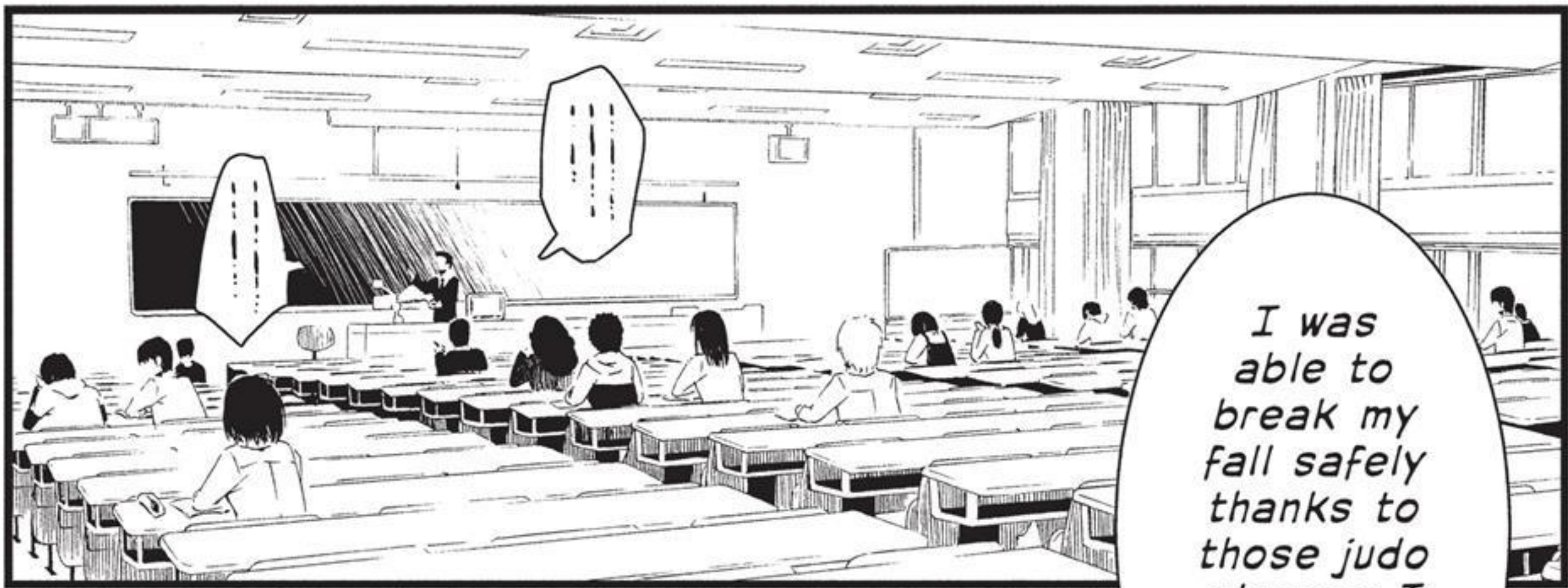












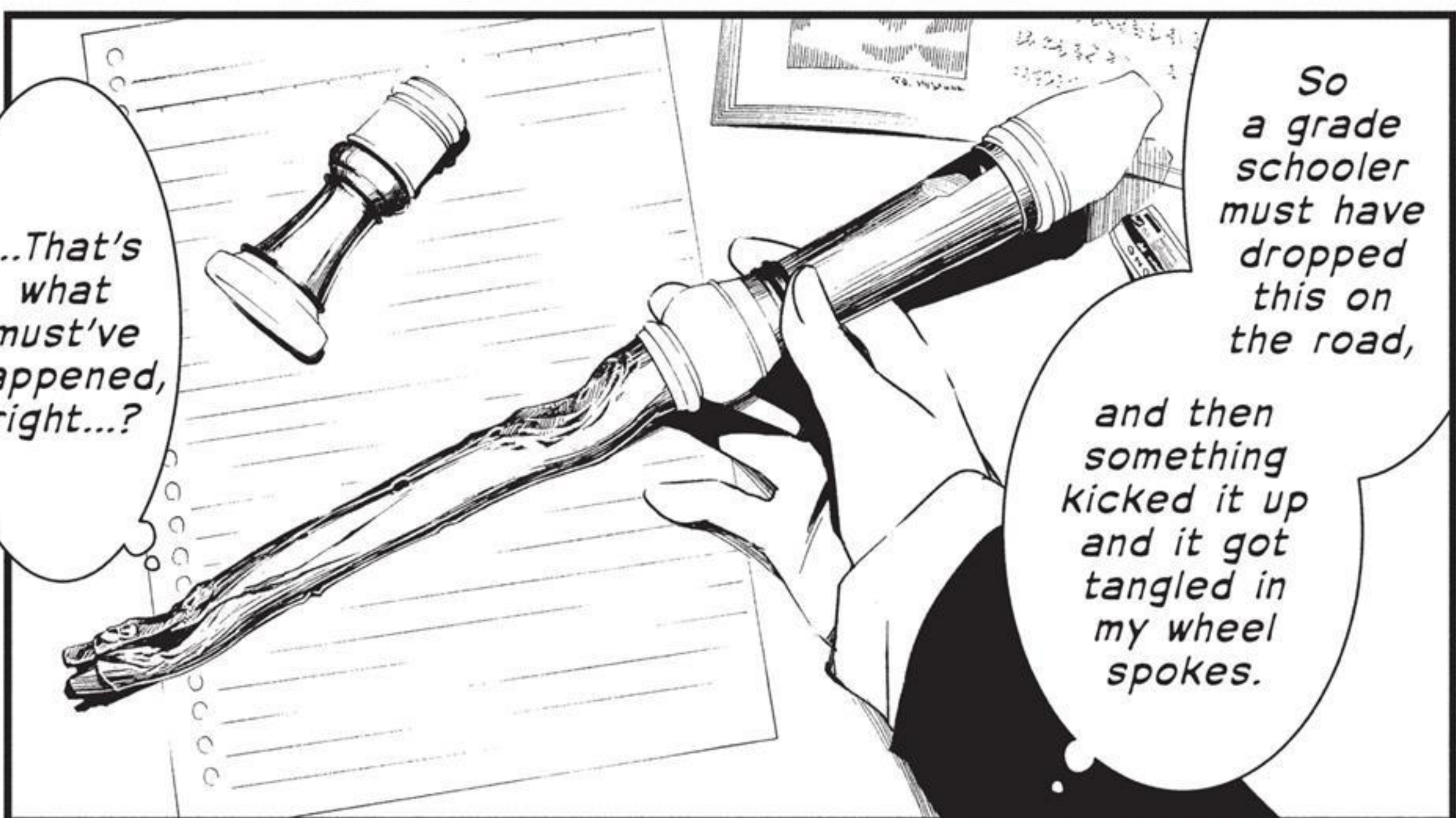
I was able to break my fall safely thanks to those judo classes I used to take, but still...



Is it normal for something like that to get stuck in your wheel

when you're riding a bike ...?

H y m m ...

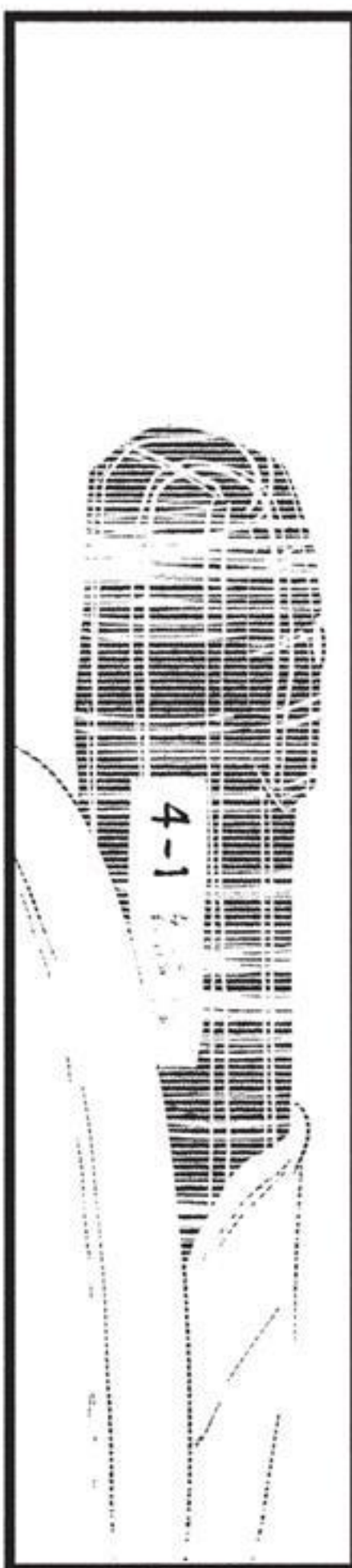


...That's what must've happened, right...?

So a grade schooler must have dropped this on the road,

and then something kicked it up and it got tangled in my wheel spokes.









I might not go so far as to call what I had a "bad feeling."

it was enough foreshadowing that looking back later, I can say, "I knew it."

But at the very least,

You watch Chura-san?

Oh yeah, I did! ♡





That anxiety continued to grow inside of me,

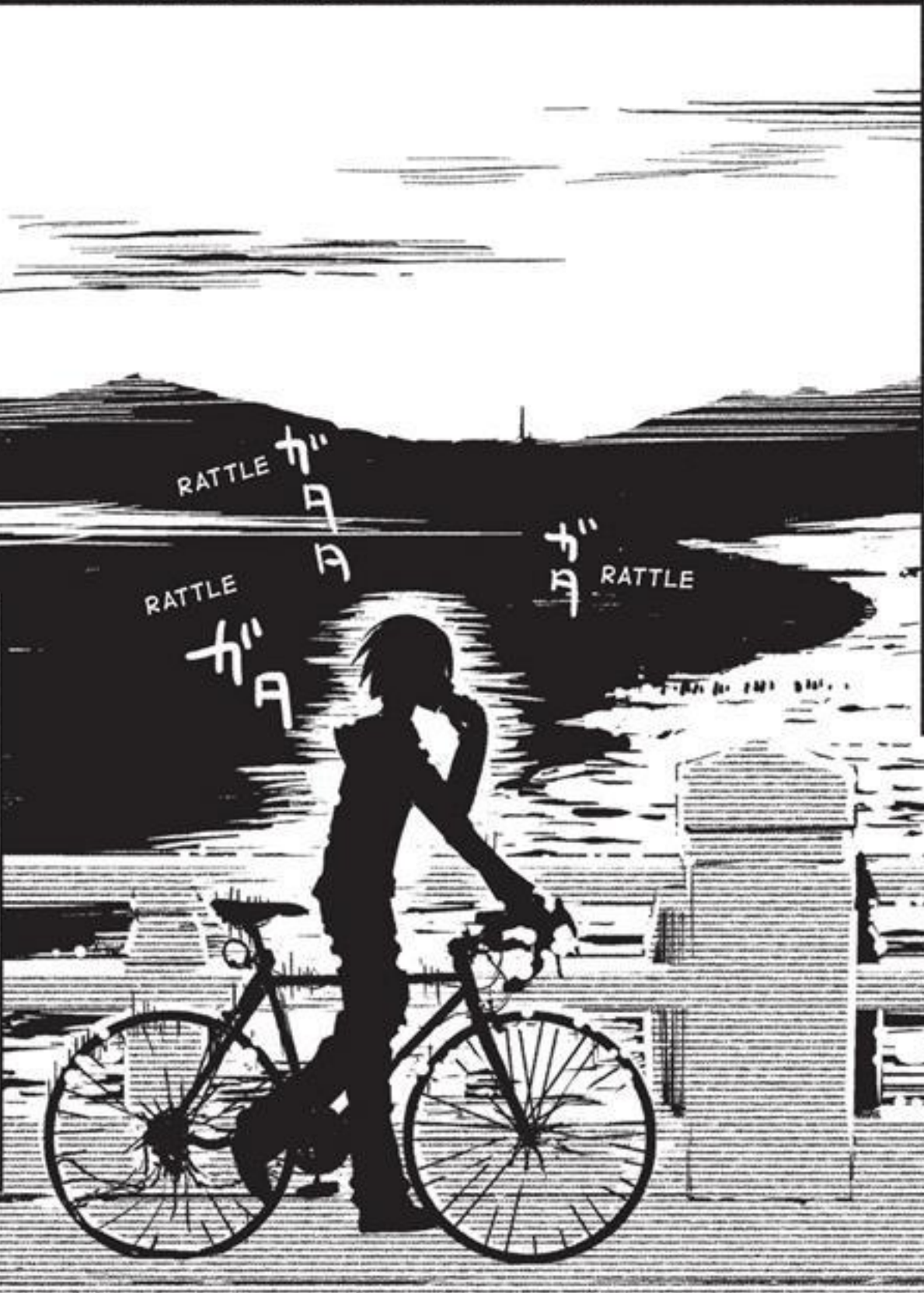
か  
か  
CHATTER

and I began to feel more and more unstable.

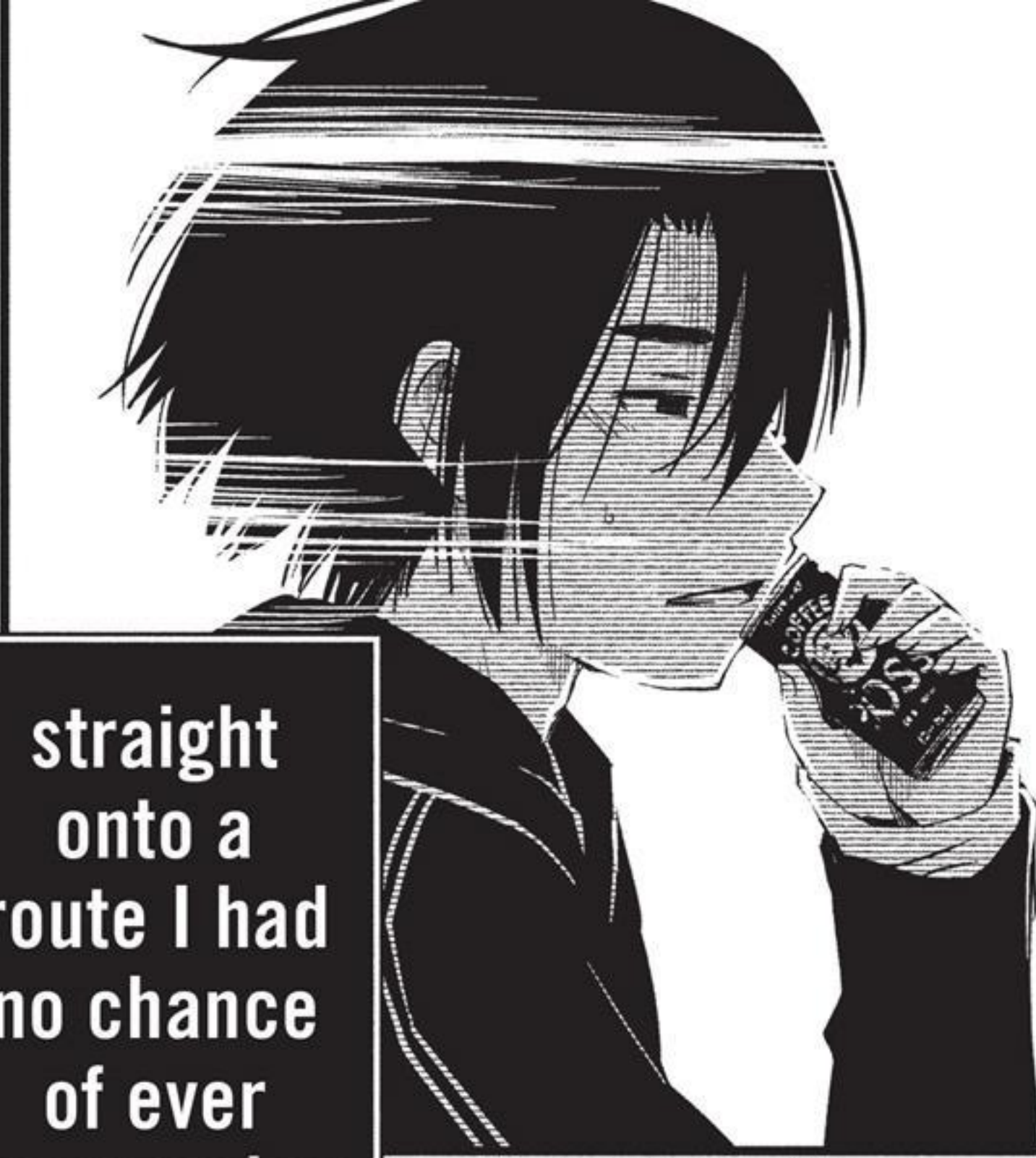


It was as if I was making some kind of huge mistake.

If I were to compare it to something, it was like an RPG,

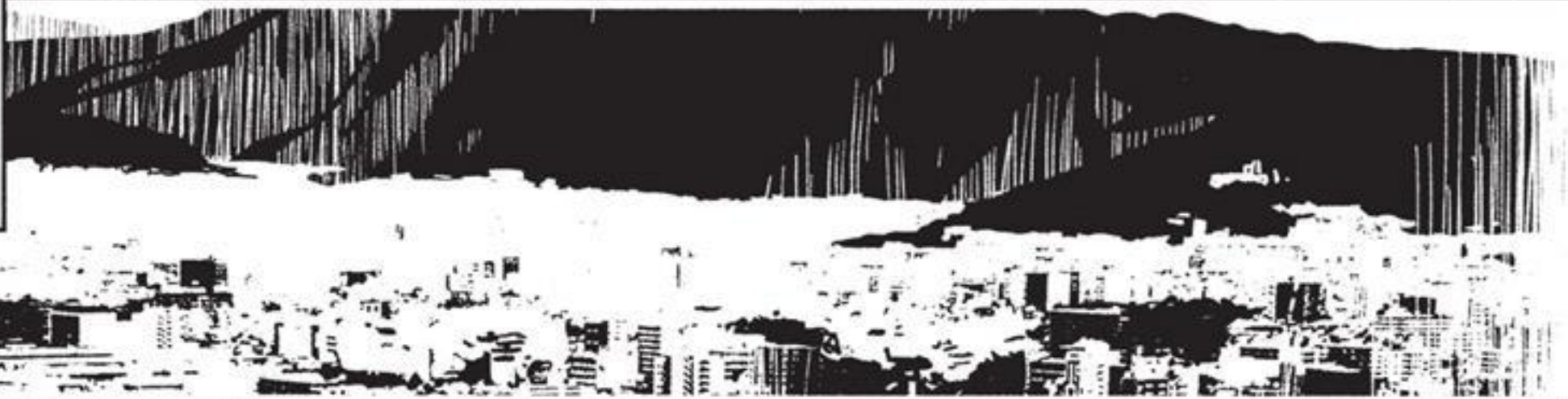






straight  
onto a  
route I had  
no chance  
of ever  
overcoming  
...

where  
I had  
wandered  
off in the  
wrong  
direction

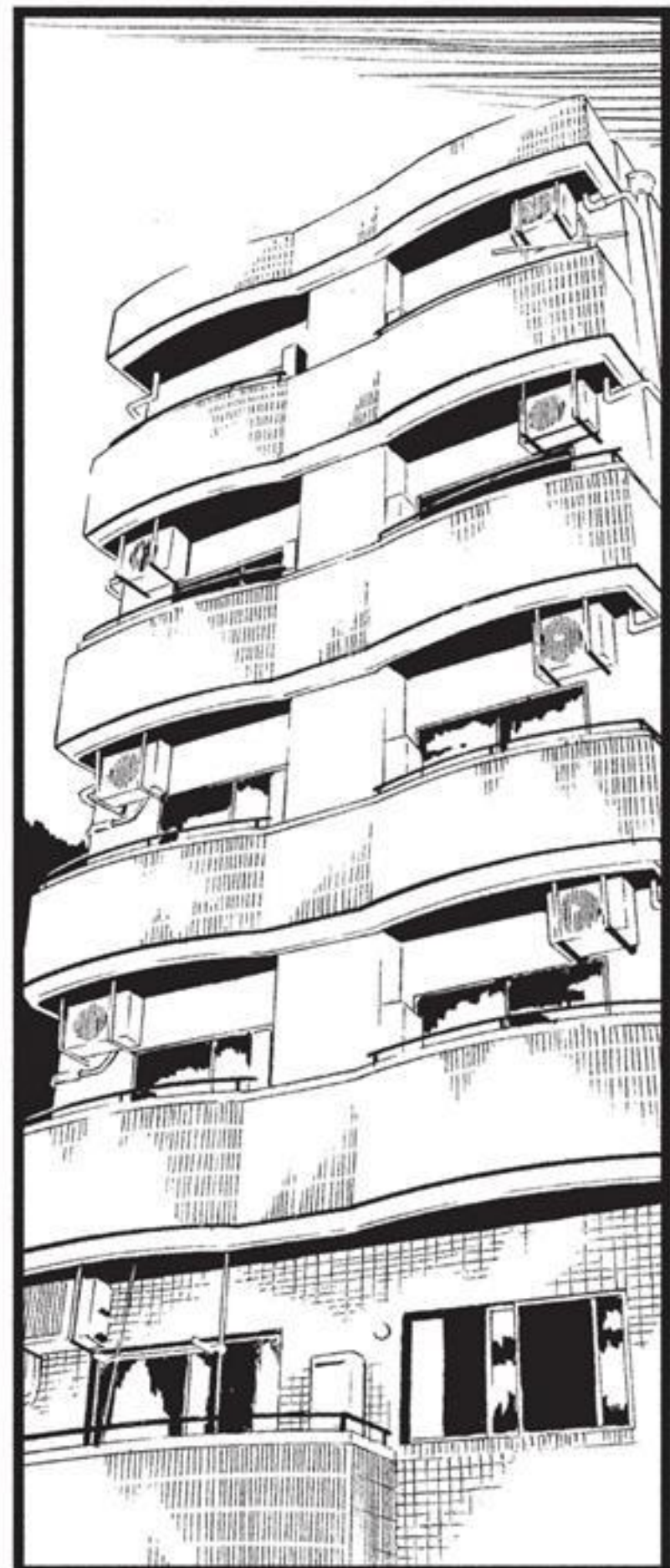


Where  
is  
my  
key  
...?

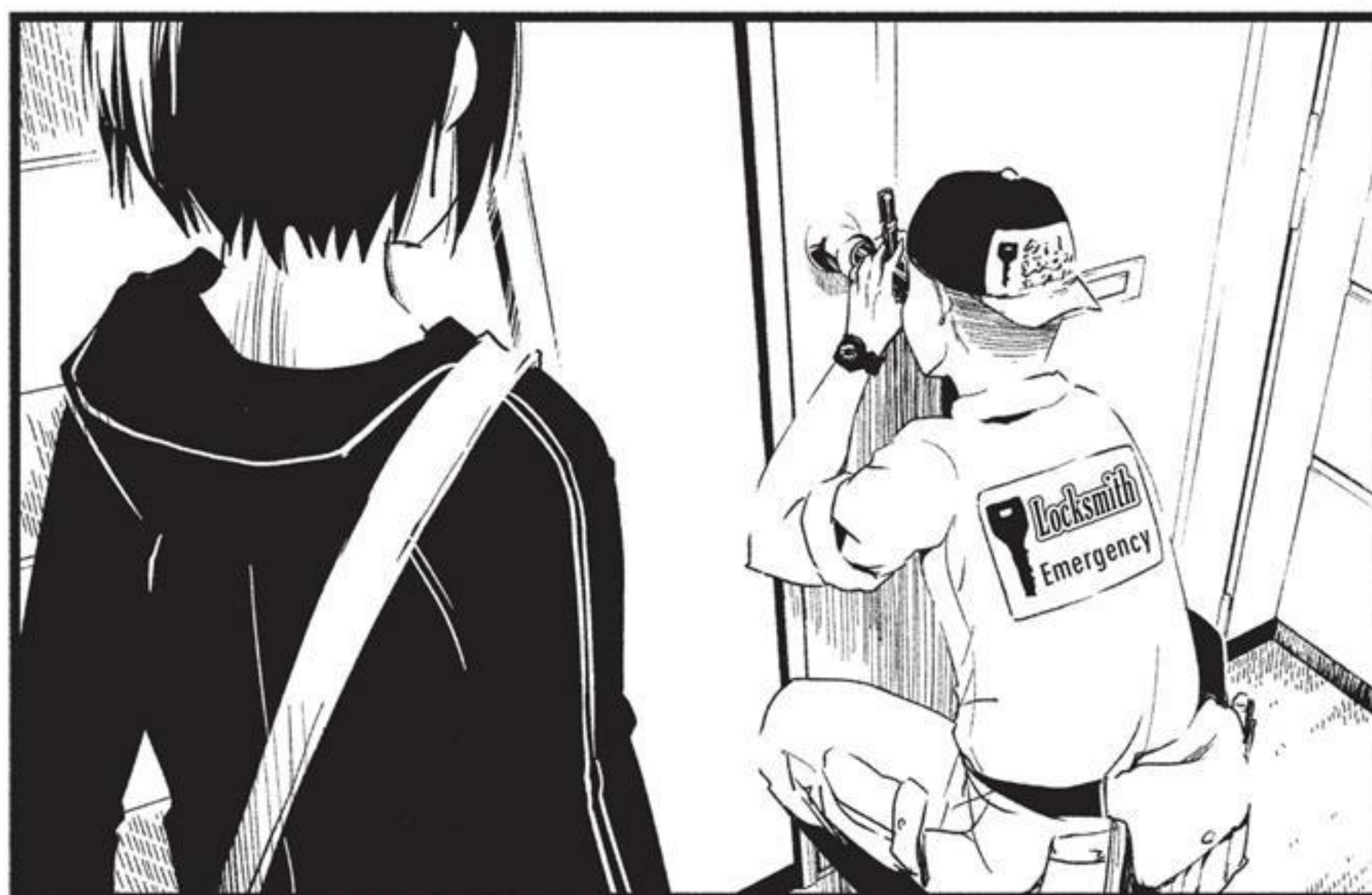
Did I  
drop it  
when I  
fell...?



Hmm  
?



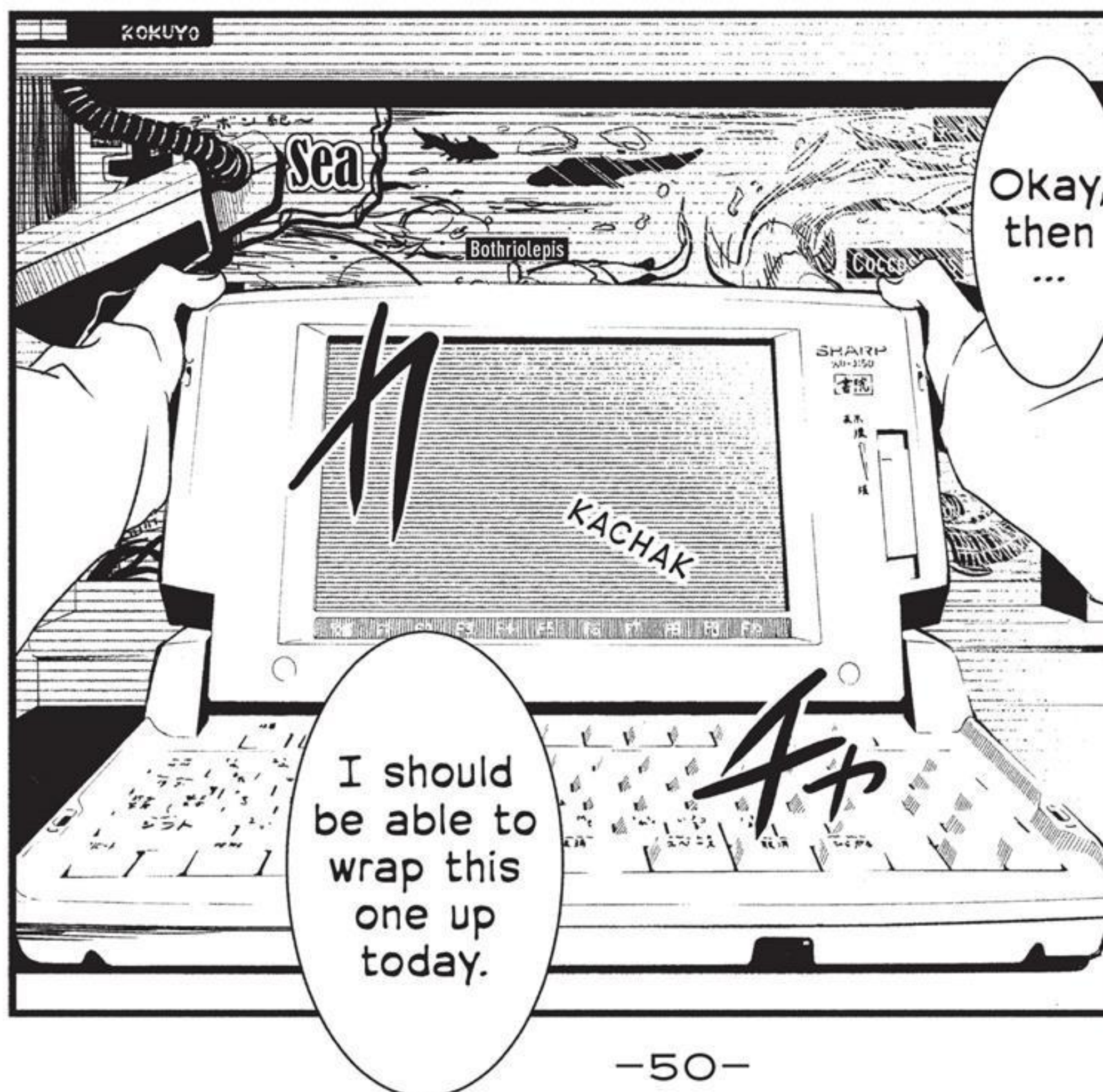




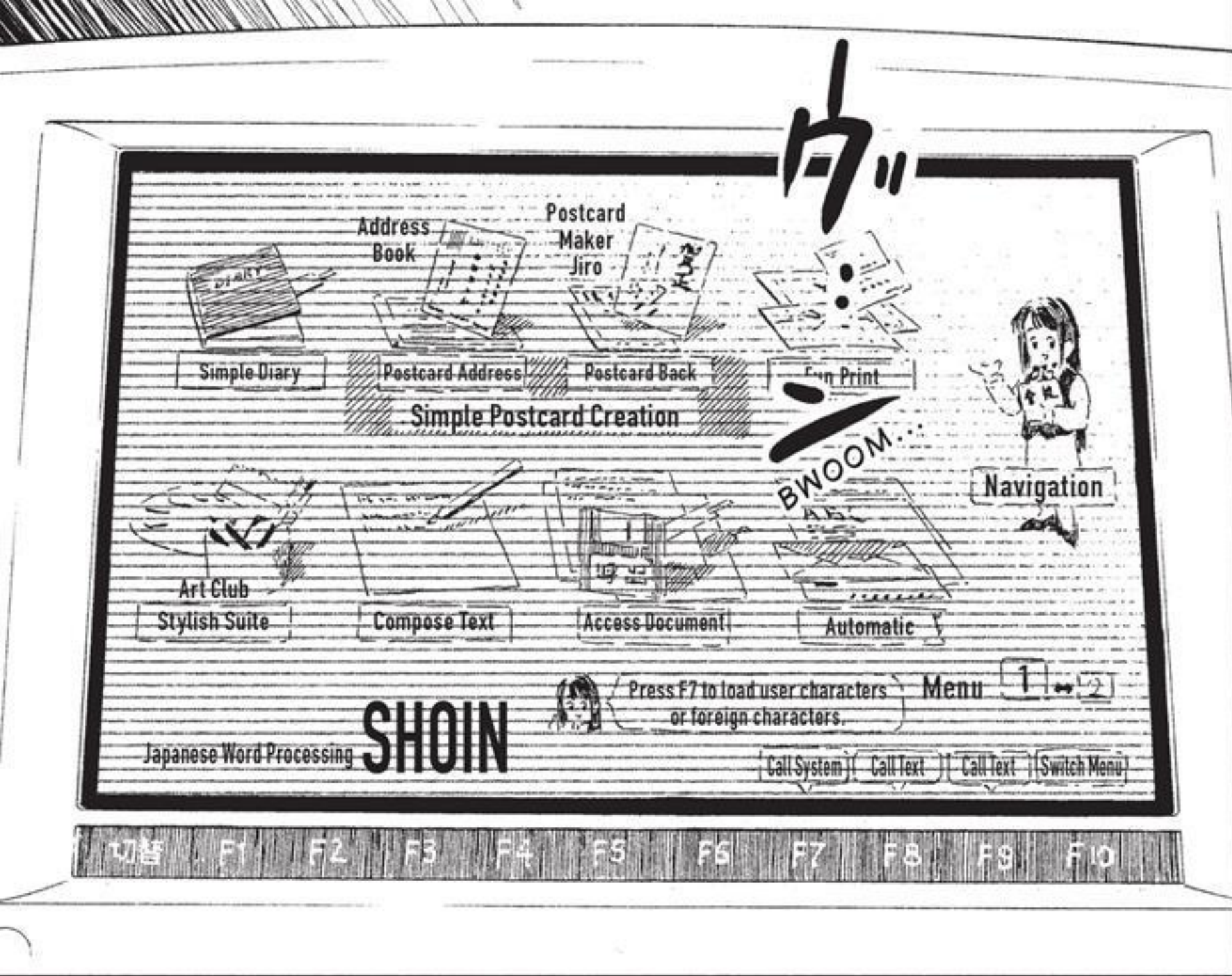




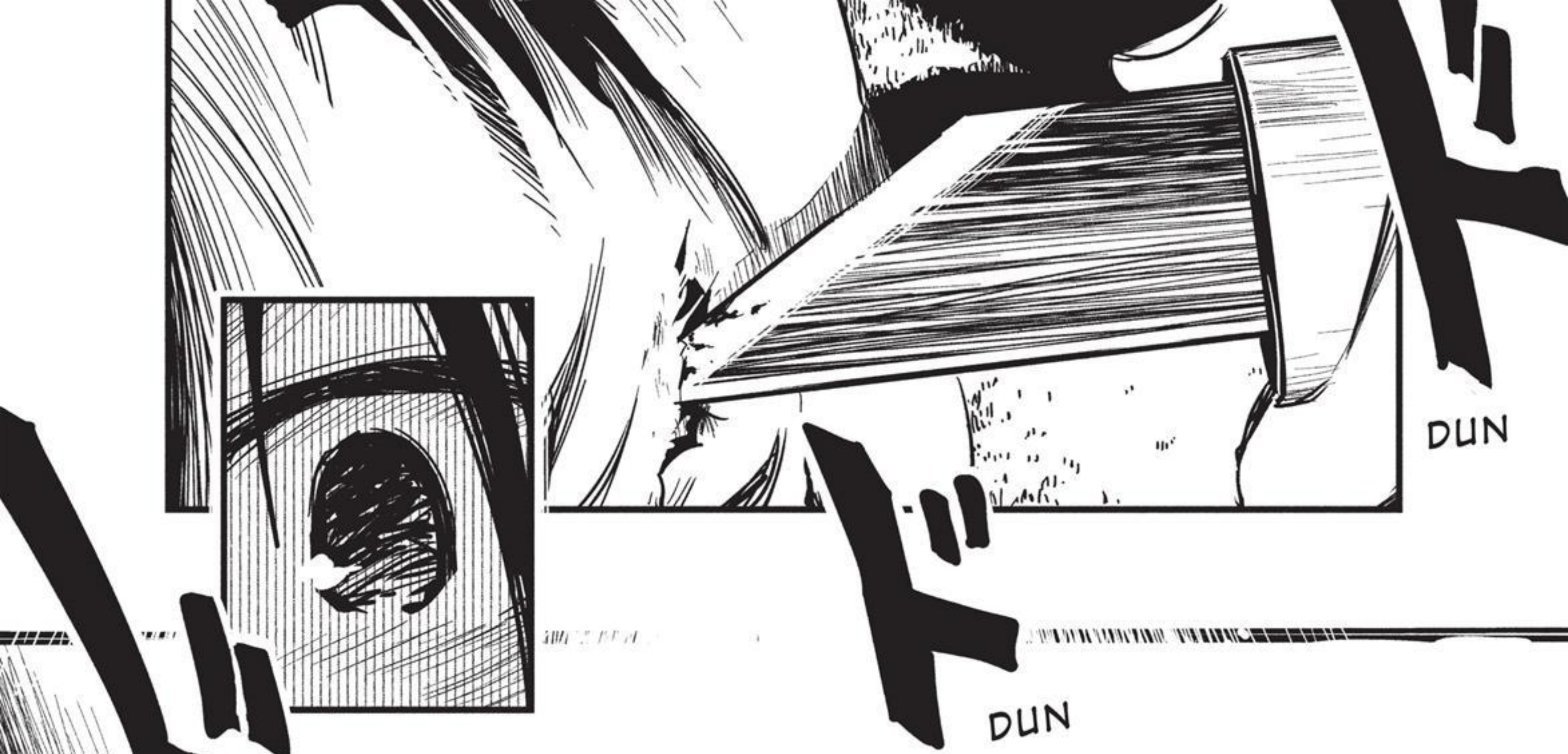




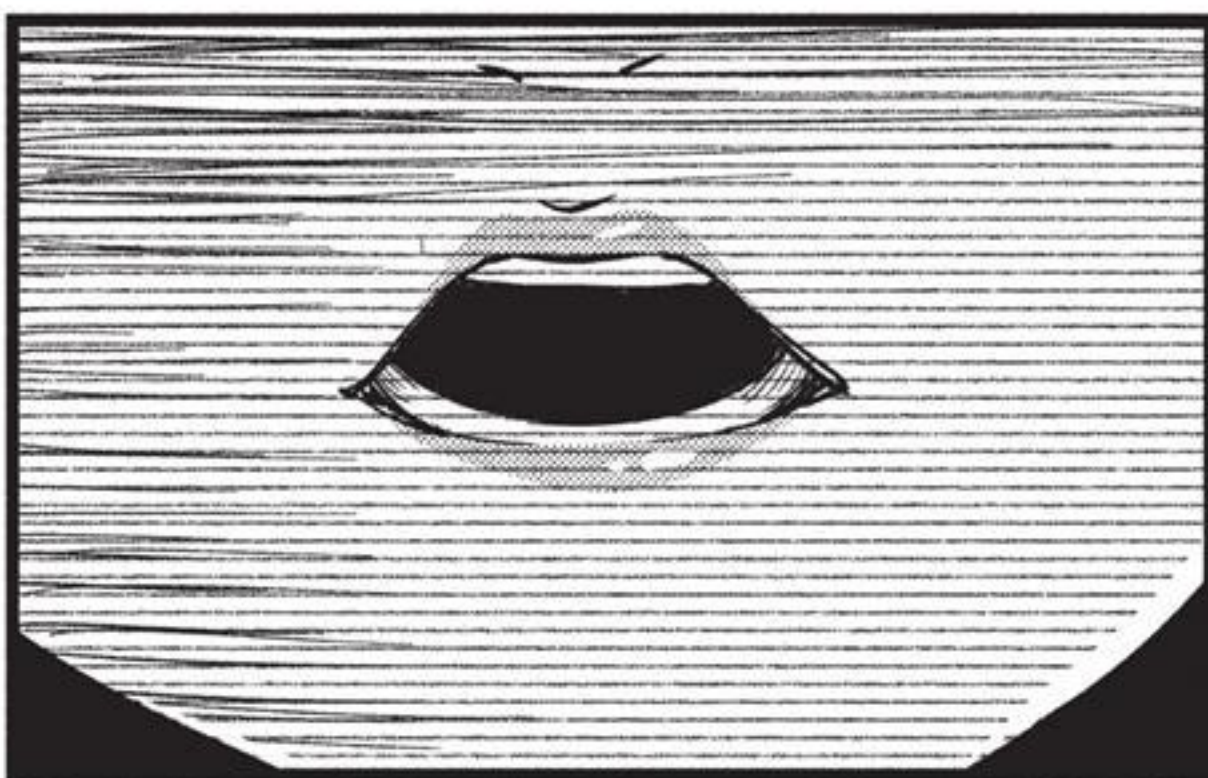




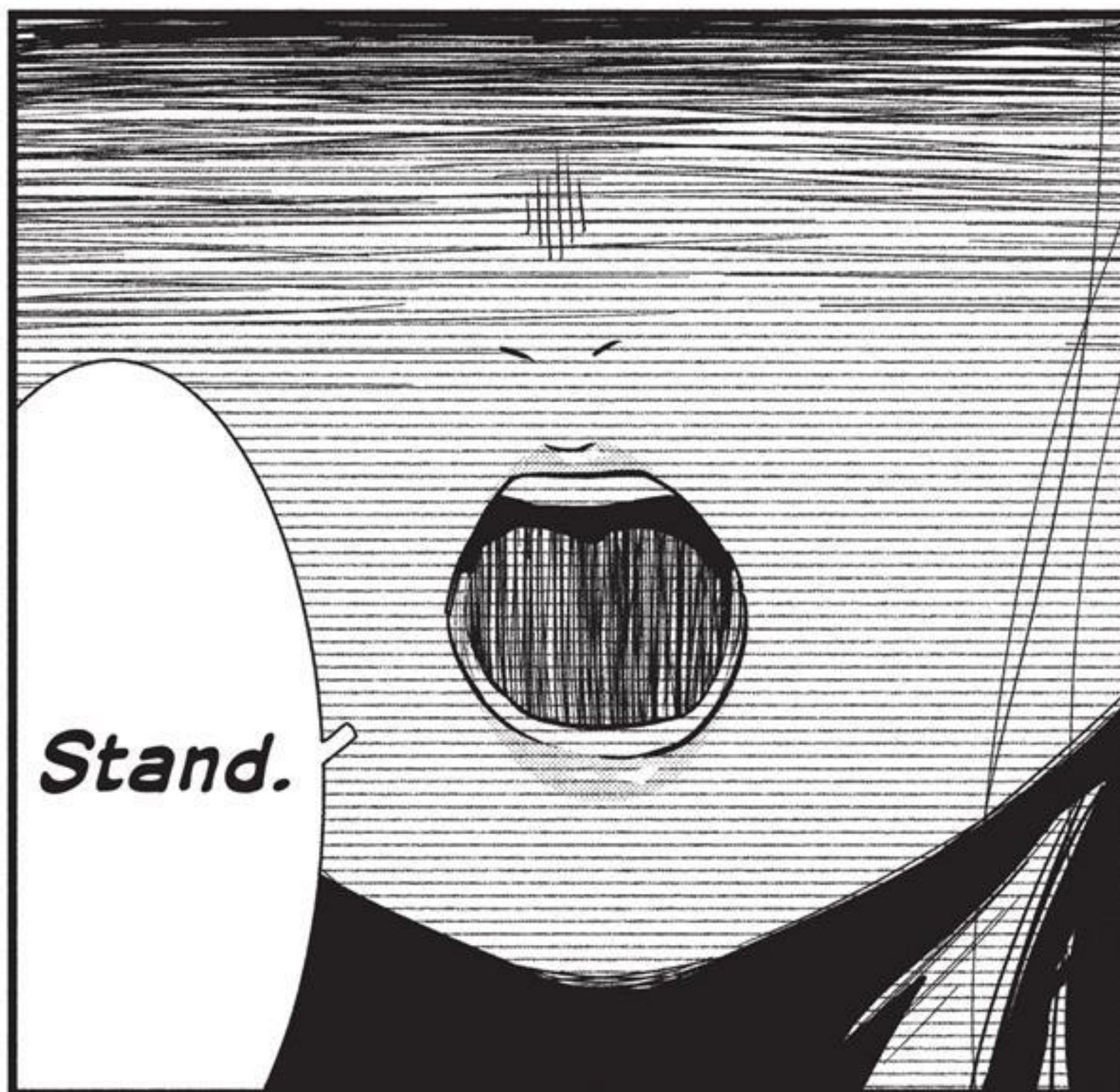








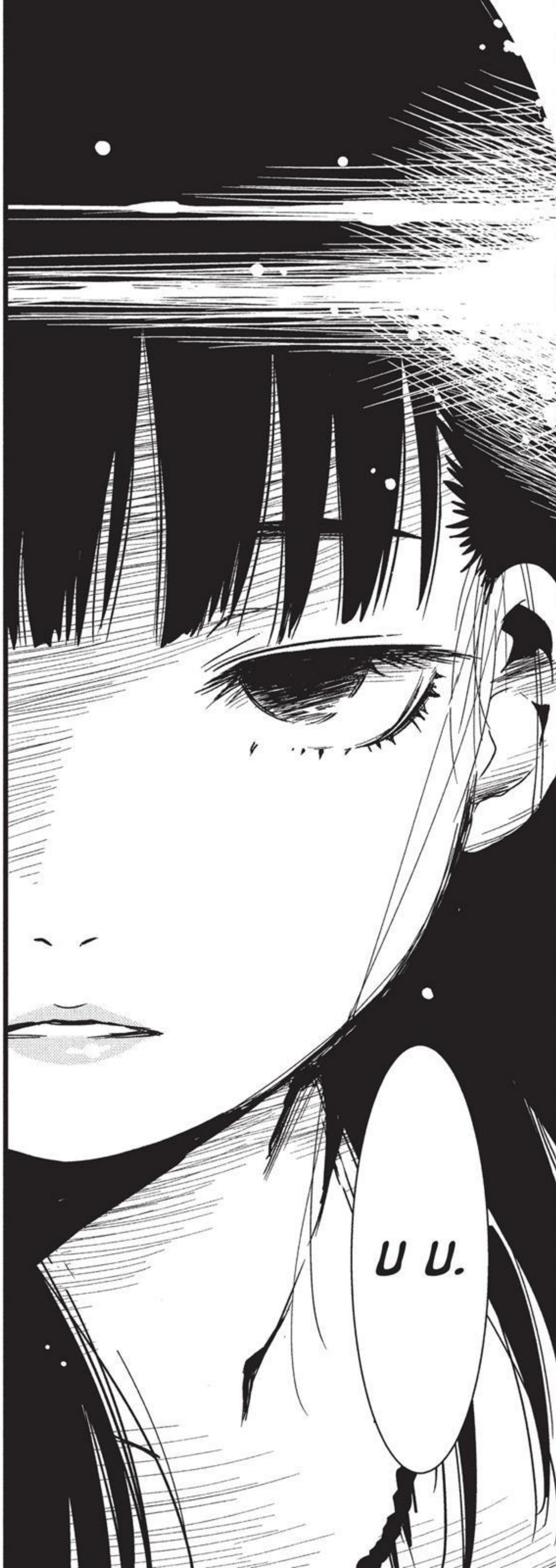












U U.

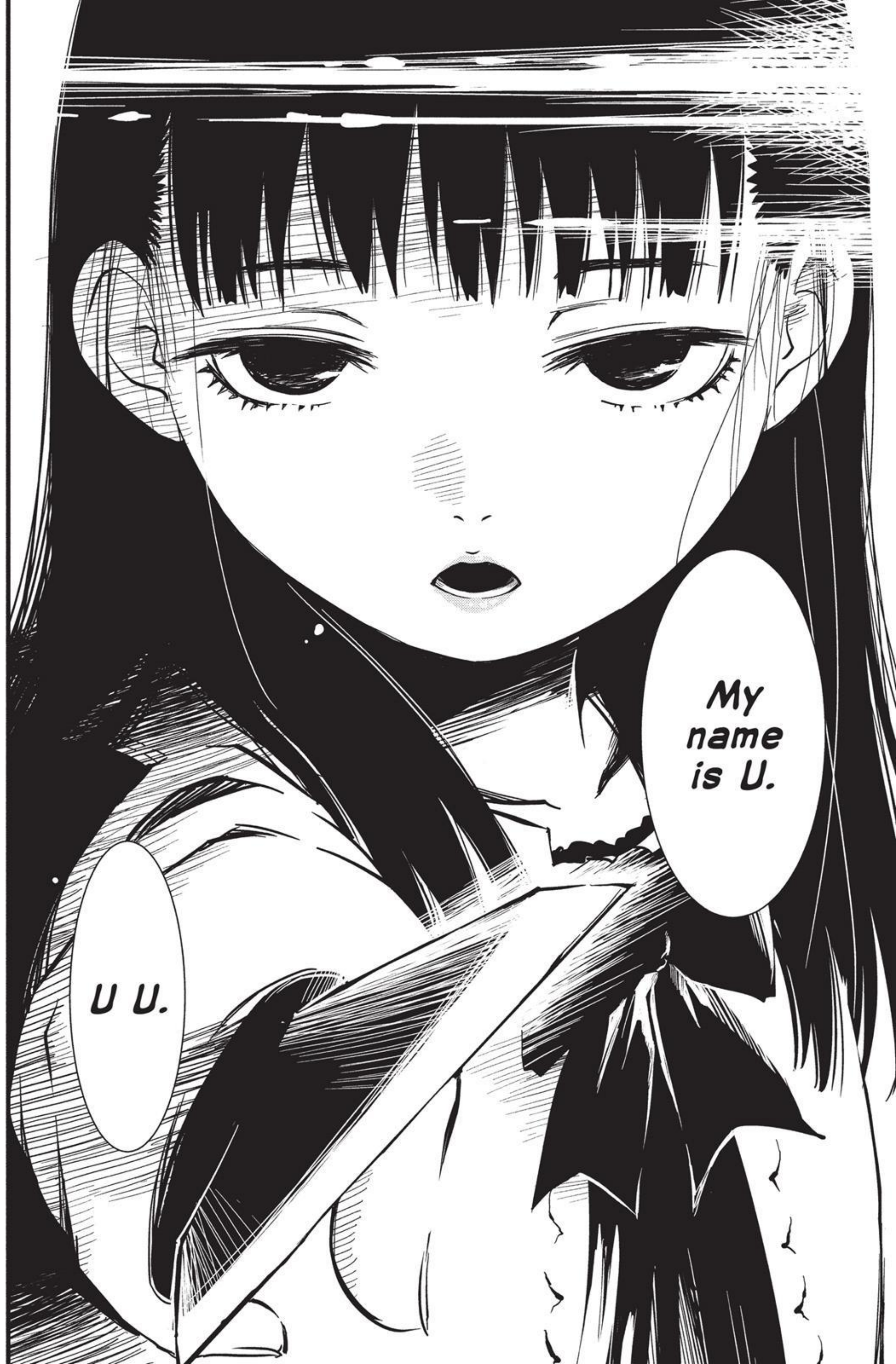


My  
name  
is U.









*My  
name  
is U.*

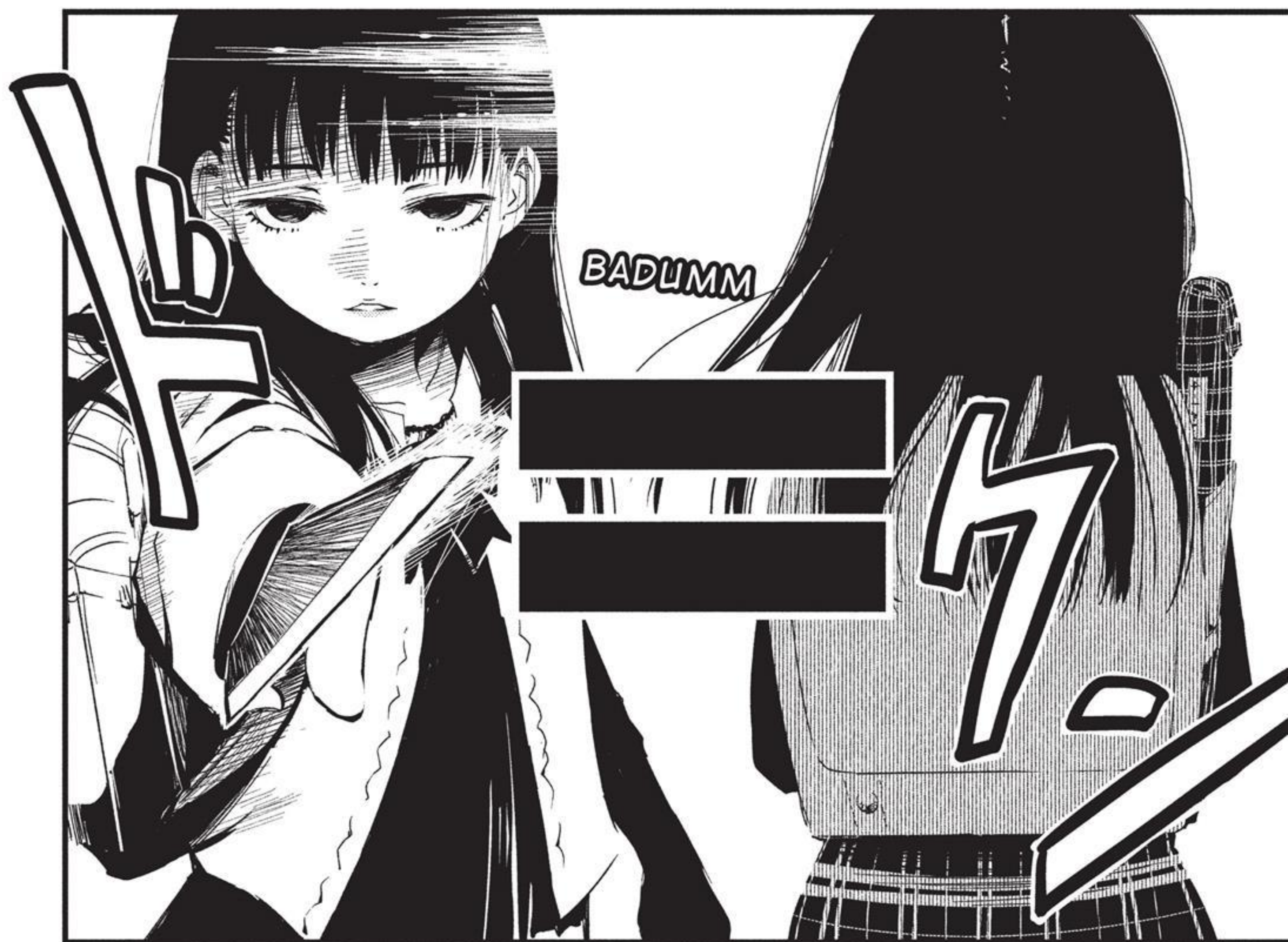
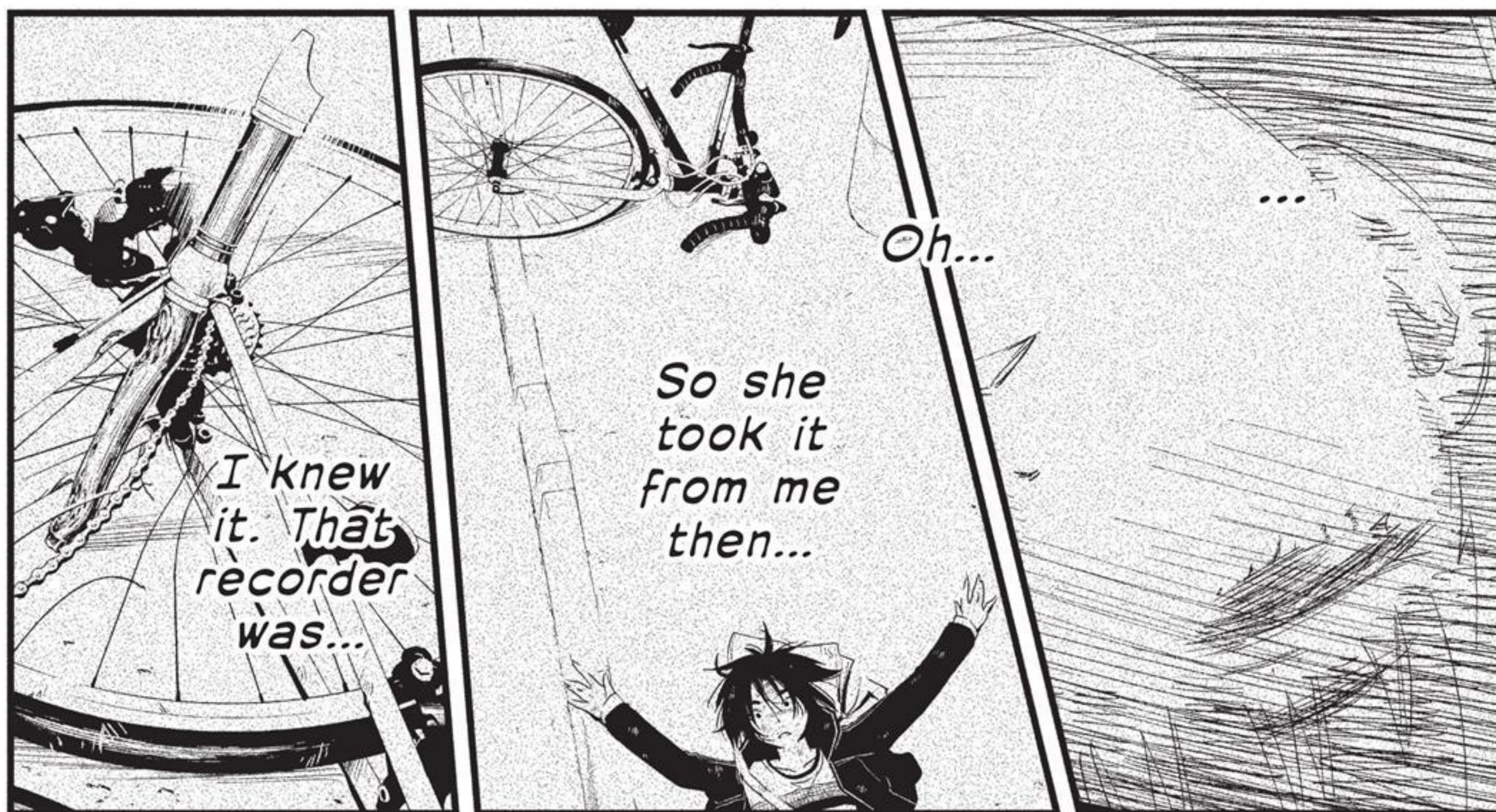
*U U.*



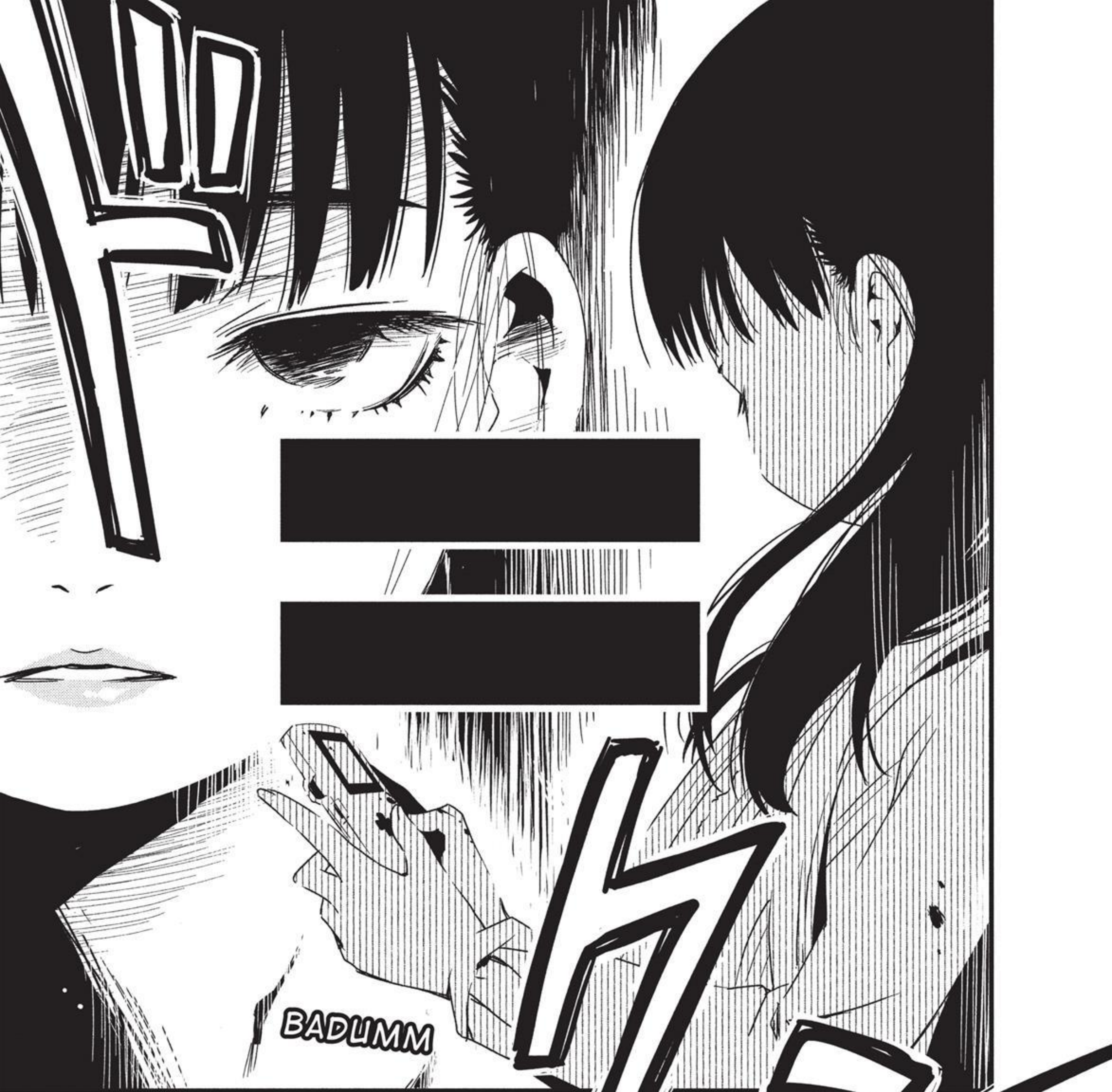
Her name wasn't really a pair  
of alphabet letters, of course.  
She gave me her regular  
Japanese name, but since this is  
an event and an incident, not a tale,  
I can't make that public here.











BADUMM

...  
Turn.







SCREAM  
fair  
pretend nothing  
is happening

ACT TOUGH

COOL

like a novel protagonist

TRAGEDY

FIGHT BACK

BLADE

STEAL THE KNIFE

JUDGEMENT

PAIN

KICK

FOR SHOW

Masochist

FEAR

SELF-DEFENSE

girl

CONFUSION

FIGHTING A CHILD

death

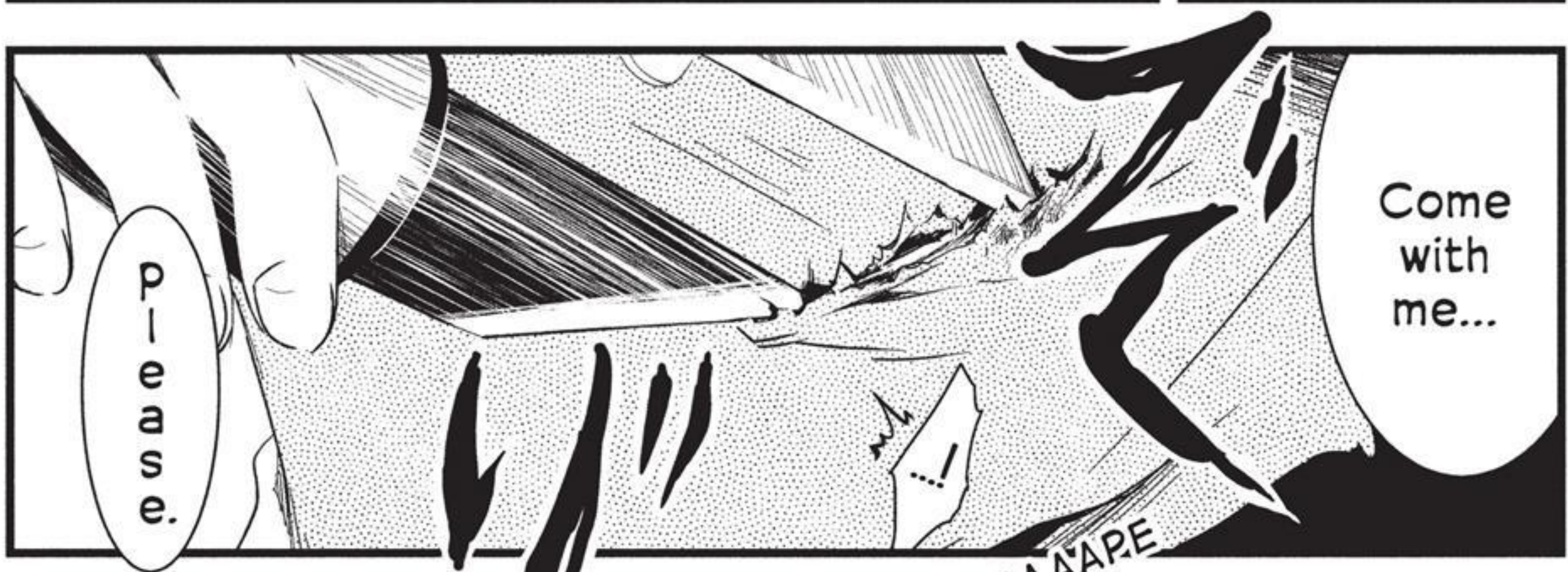
IDIOT

GUILT

BLEEDING



STAY  
COMPOSED





She's  
doing  
things  
out of  
order.



...  
me.

If you  
have...  
some  
kind of  
reason,  
then...

I see.  
But... why  
do I need  
to go with  
you...?

...  
Oh.







*You  
saw  
me  
and  
so  
I'm  
taking  
you.*

*Be-  
cause  
you  
saw  
me.*





then yes,  
I did  
indeed  
see her.

If she  
puts  
it like  
that,

...  
...



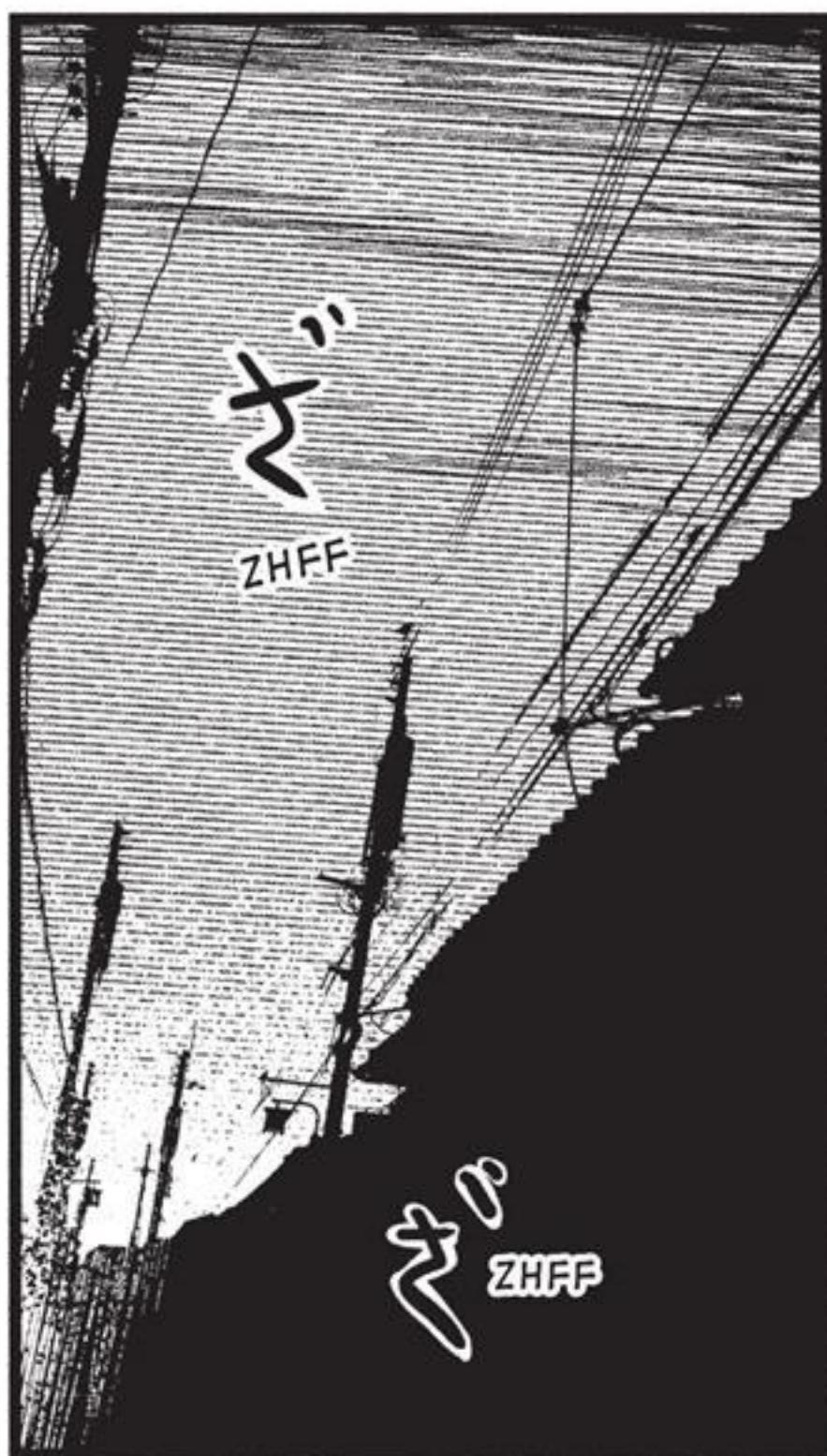
In  
that  
brief  
moment,

I saw who  
this girl,  
U, really  
is.

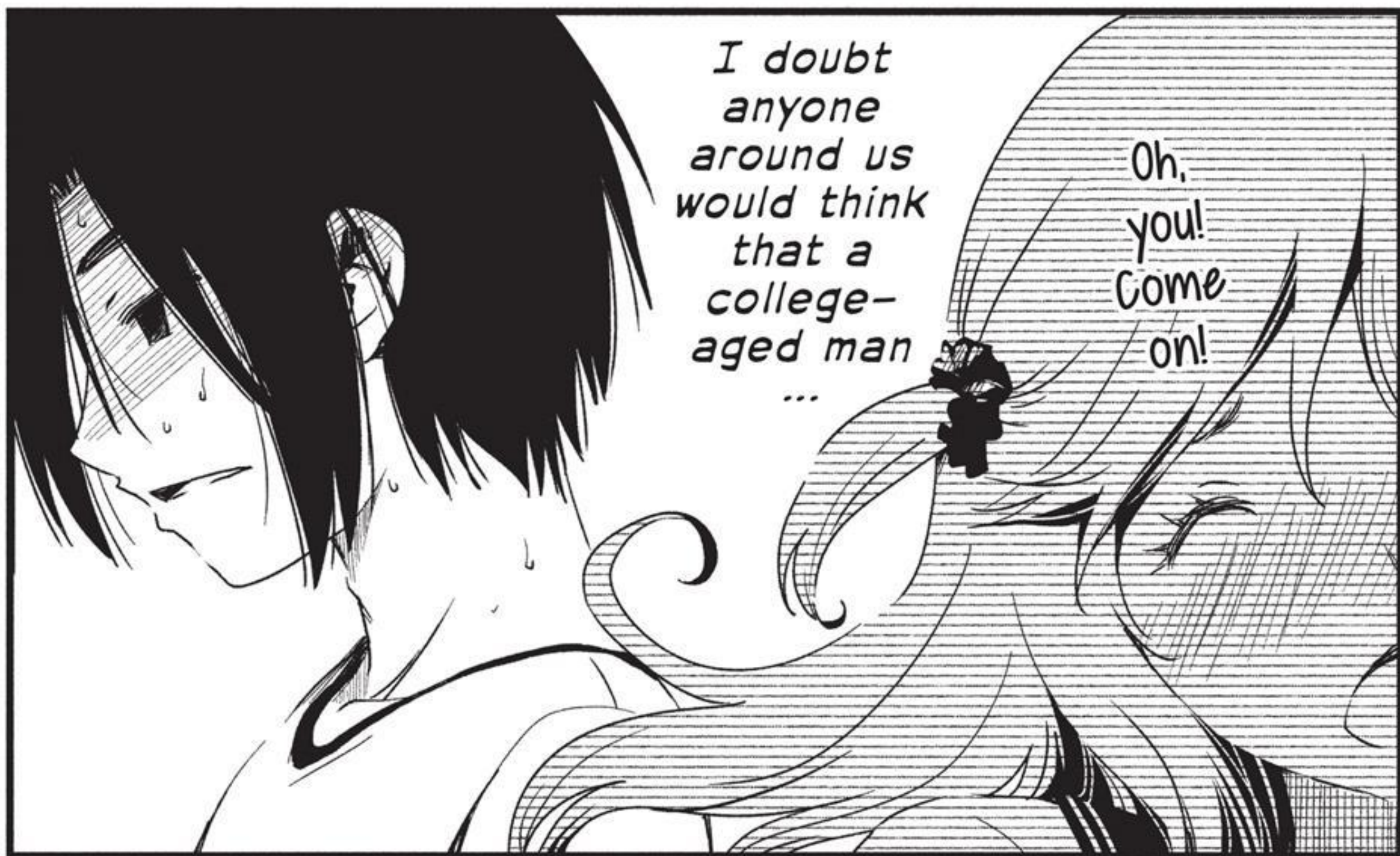


I saw  
right  
through  
her...









I doubt  
anyone  
around us  
would think  
that a  
college-  
aged man  
...

Oh,  
you!  
Come  
on!



HUB

ガ  
ヤ

ガ  
ヤ  
BUB

BUB



is  
being  
abducted  
by a  
grade-  
school  
girl right  
now...

Ah  
ha  
ha!



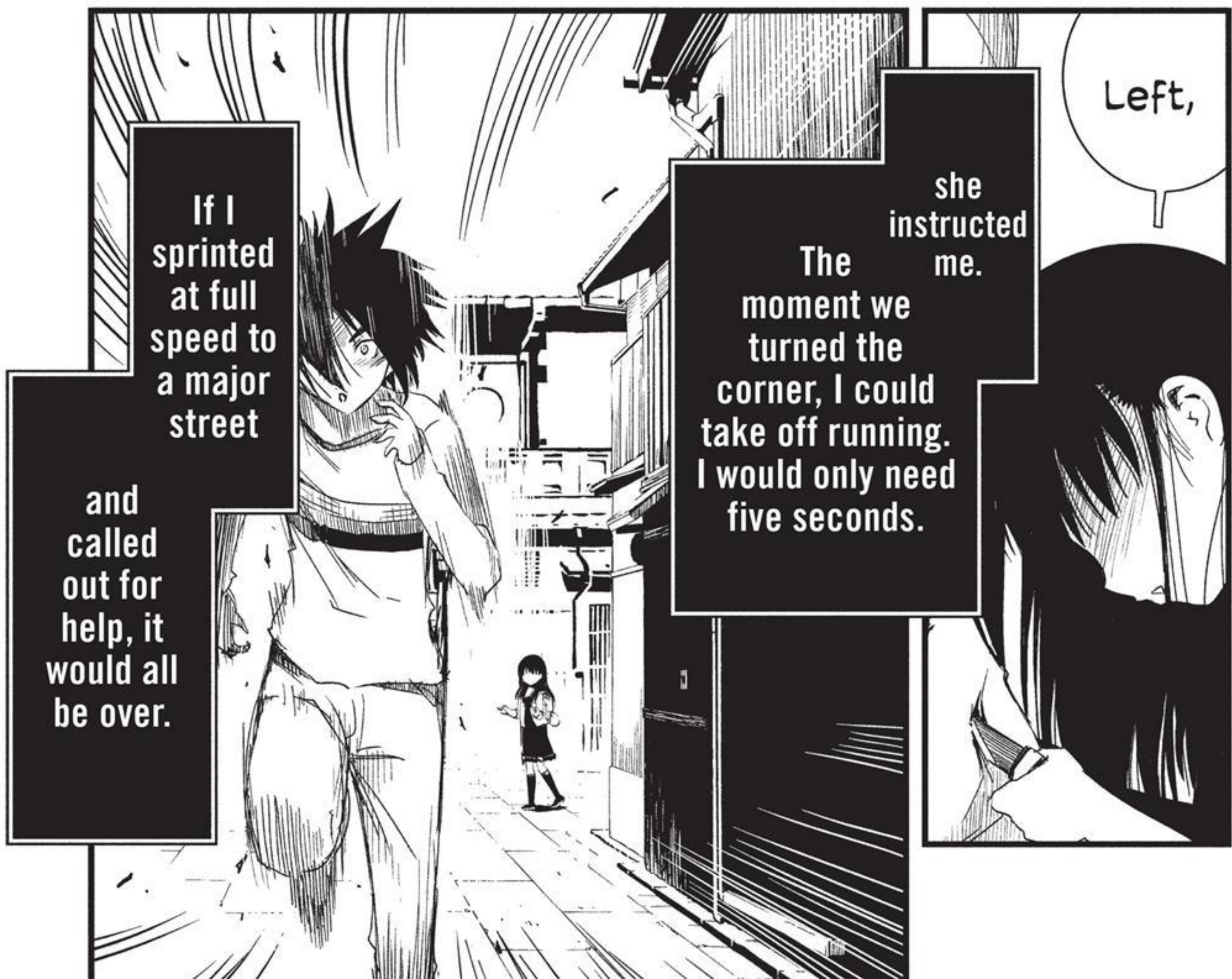


they might  
think that  
**ANOTHER  
SORT OF  
CRIME**  
is taking  
place...

No...  
you've  
got it  
totally  
wrong  
...



If  
anything  
...



If I  
sprinted  
at full  
speed to  
a major  
street

and  
called  
out for  
help, it  
would all  
be over.

she  
instructed  
me.  
  
The  
moment we  
turned the  
corner, I could  
take off running.  
I would only need  
five seconds.

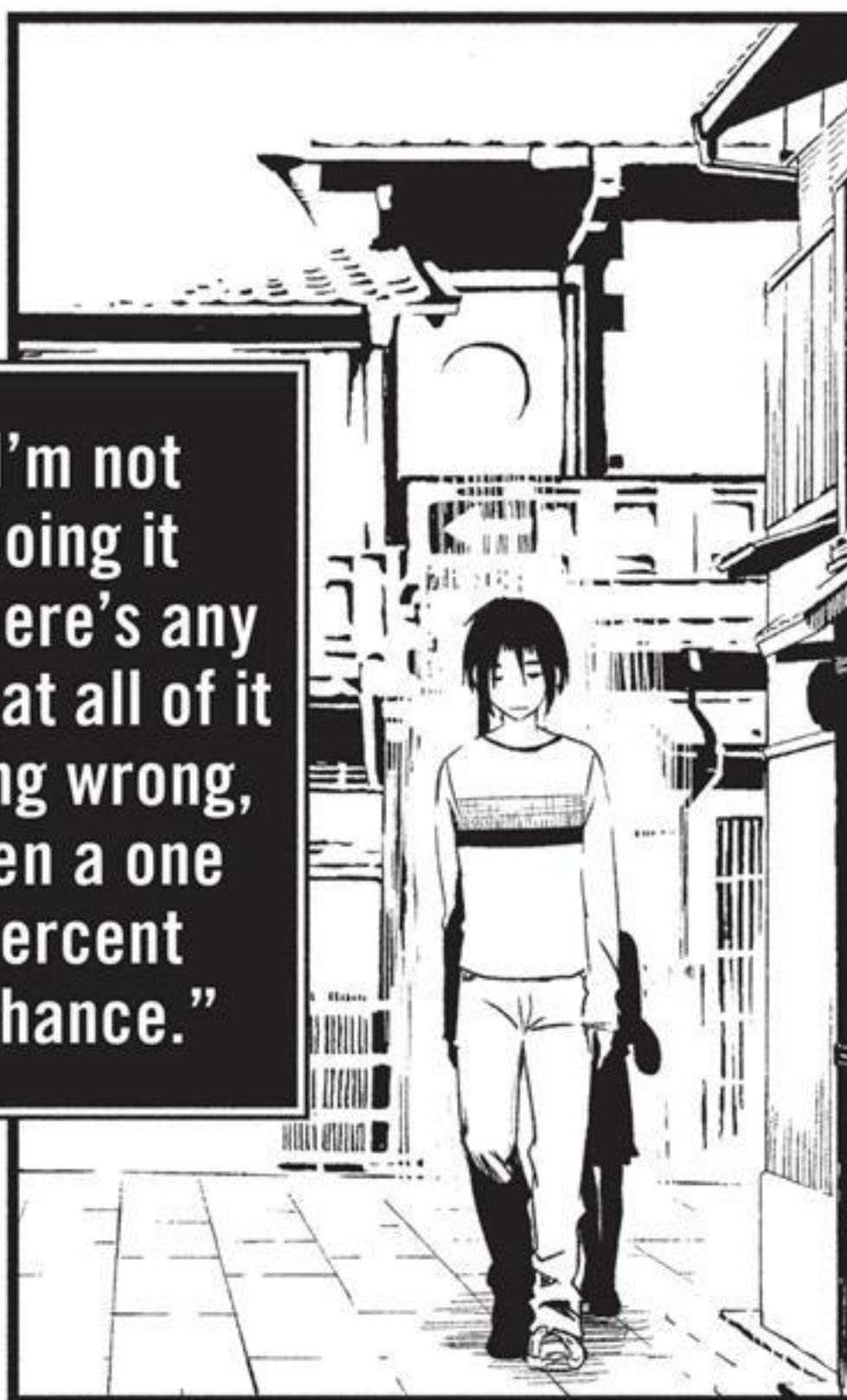
Left,





That  
wasn't  
even the  
rationale  
I came up  
with at the  
time.

"I'm not  
doing it  
if there's any  
risk at all of it  
going wrong,  
even a one  
percent  
chance."

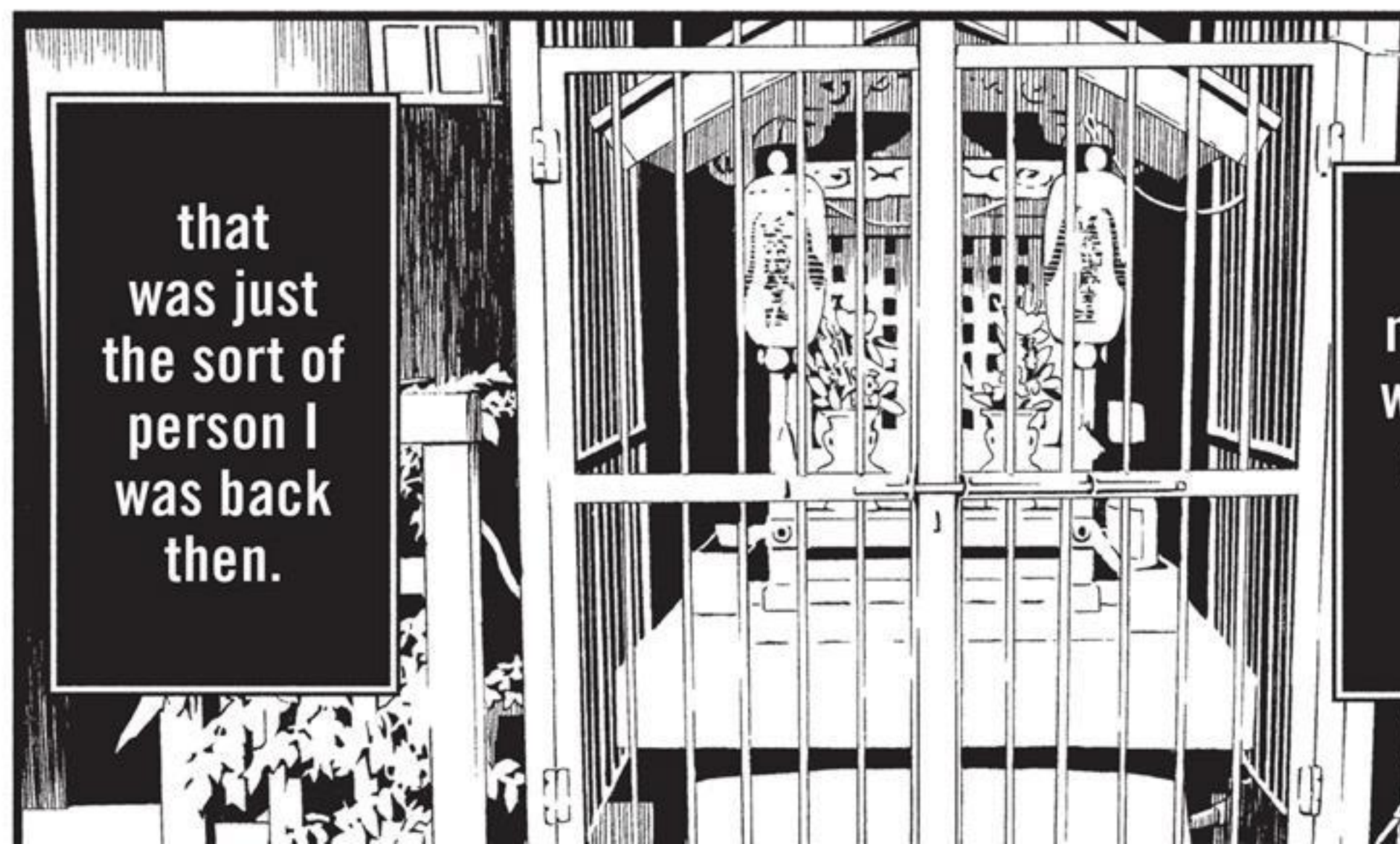


But I  
know that  
my past  
self didn't  
do that.



was  
that I  
couldn't  
think of  
anything  
to do.

All that  
happened



that  
was just  
the sort of  
person I  
was back  
then.

no matter  
what slick  
excuse I  
say,

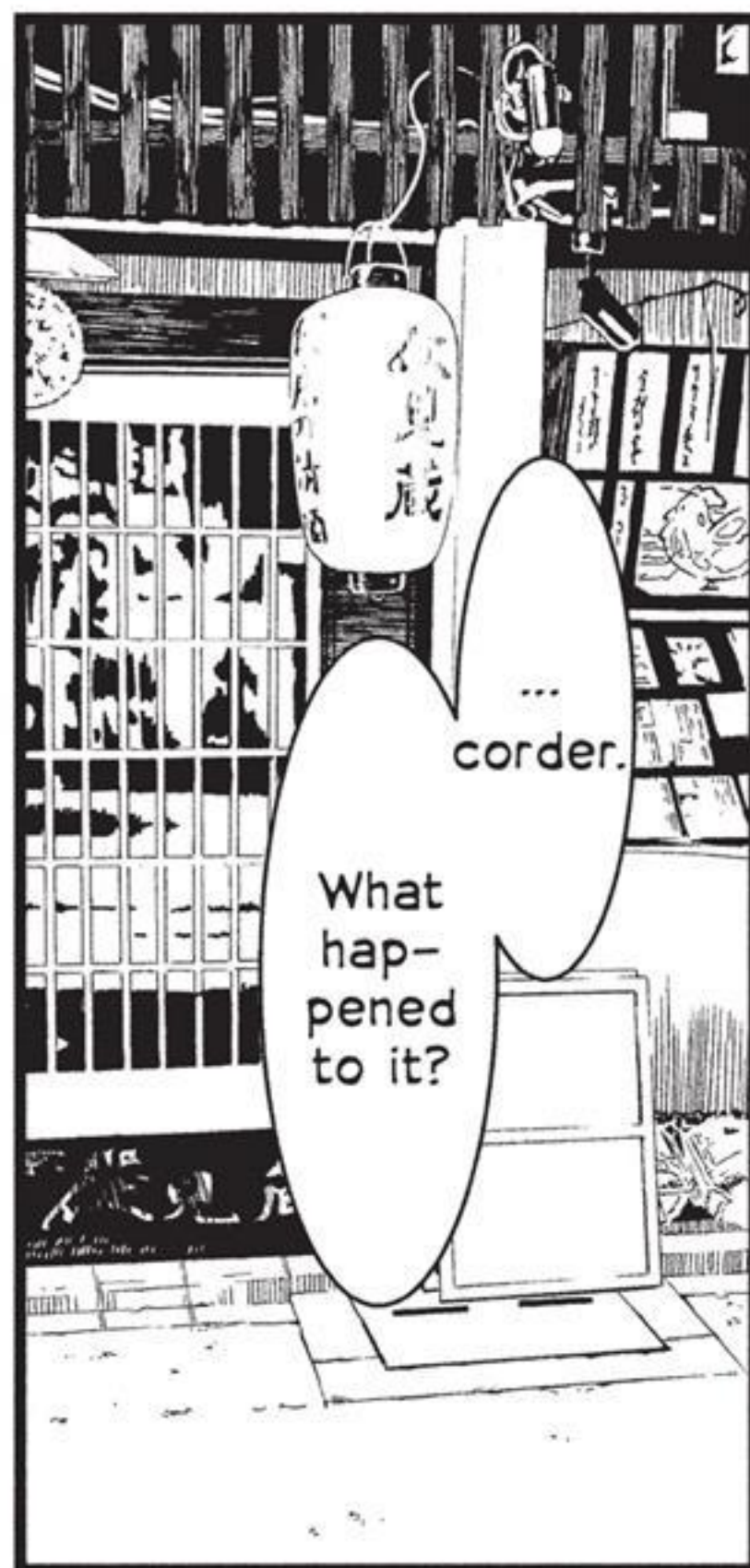
No  
matter  
how  
calm I  
pretend  
to be,





Your  
corder  
...?

Huh  
...?



...  
corder.

What  
hap-  
pened  
to it?



Oh  
...

My  
recorder.



...

I need  
it for  
school  
...



Well...  
it's still  
in my bag  
inside my  
apartment  
...





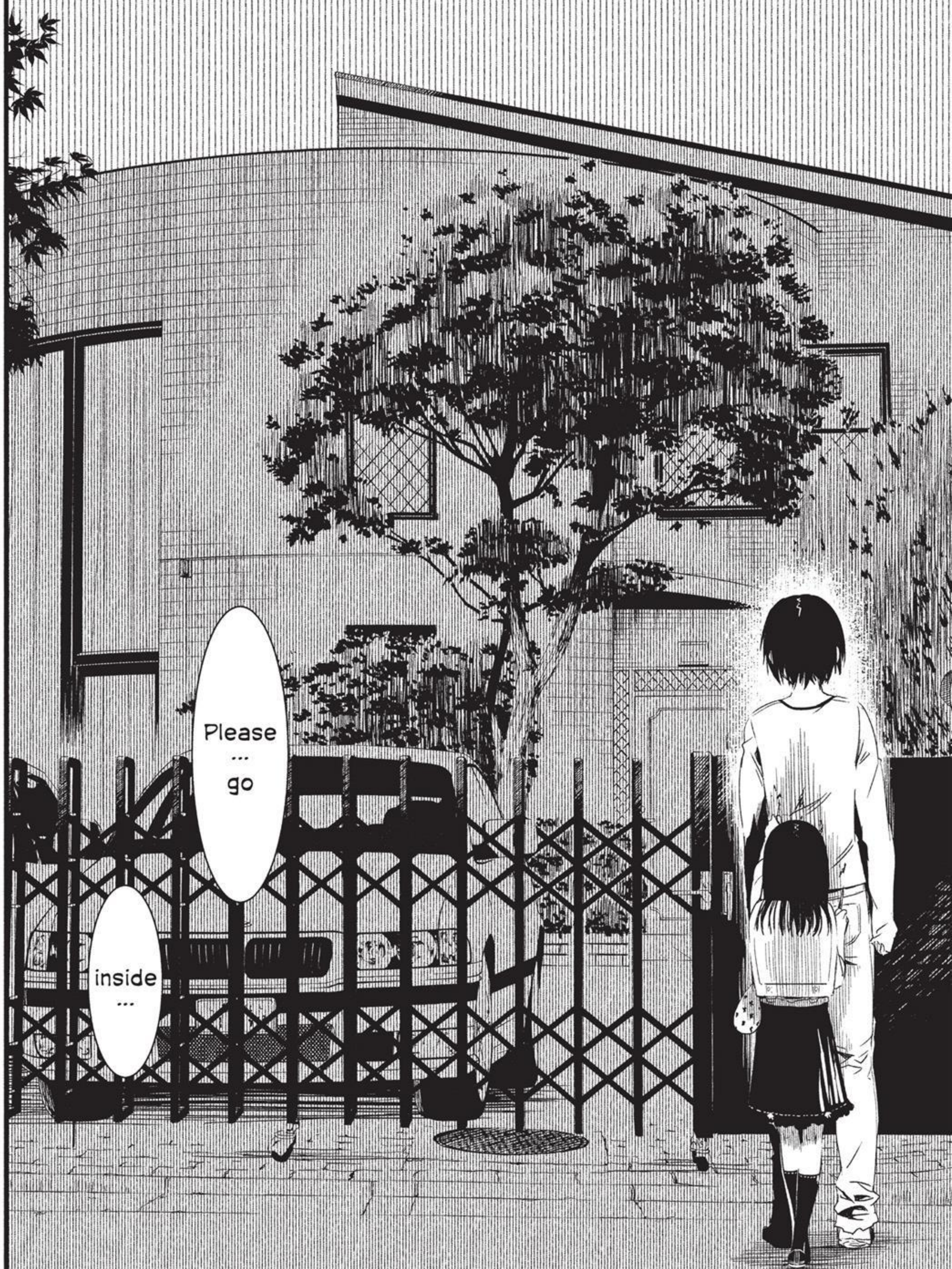
*Thank  
you  
very  
much.*











Please  
...  
go

inside  
...





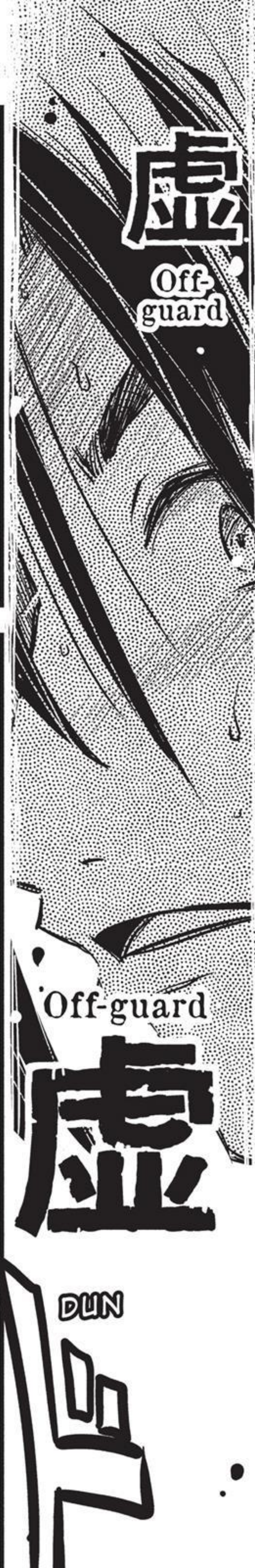




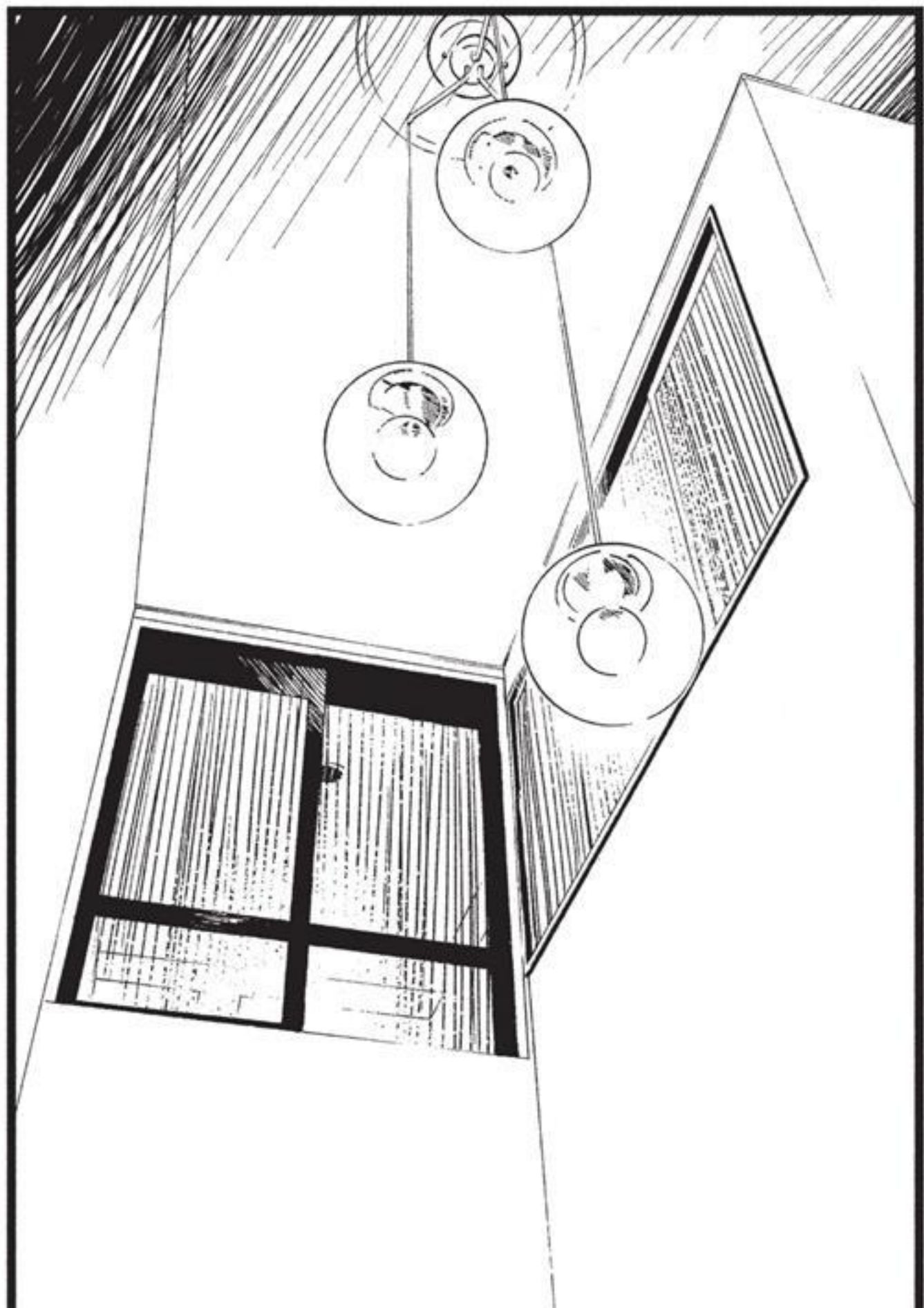




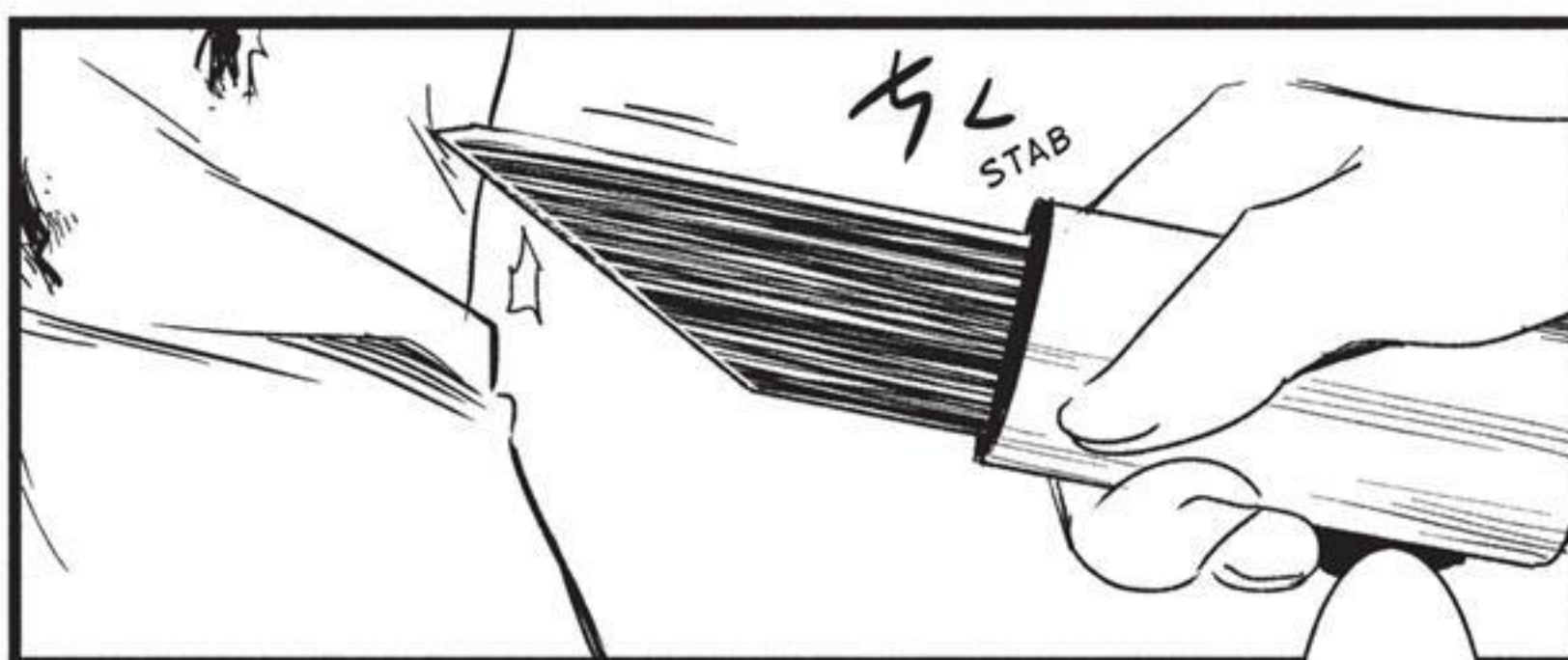




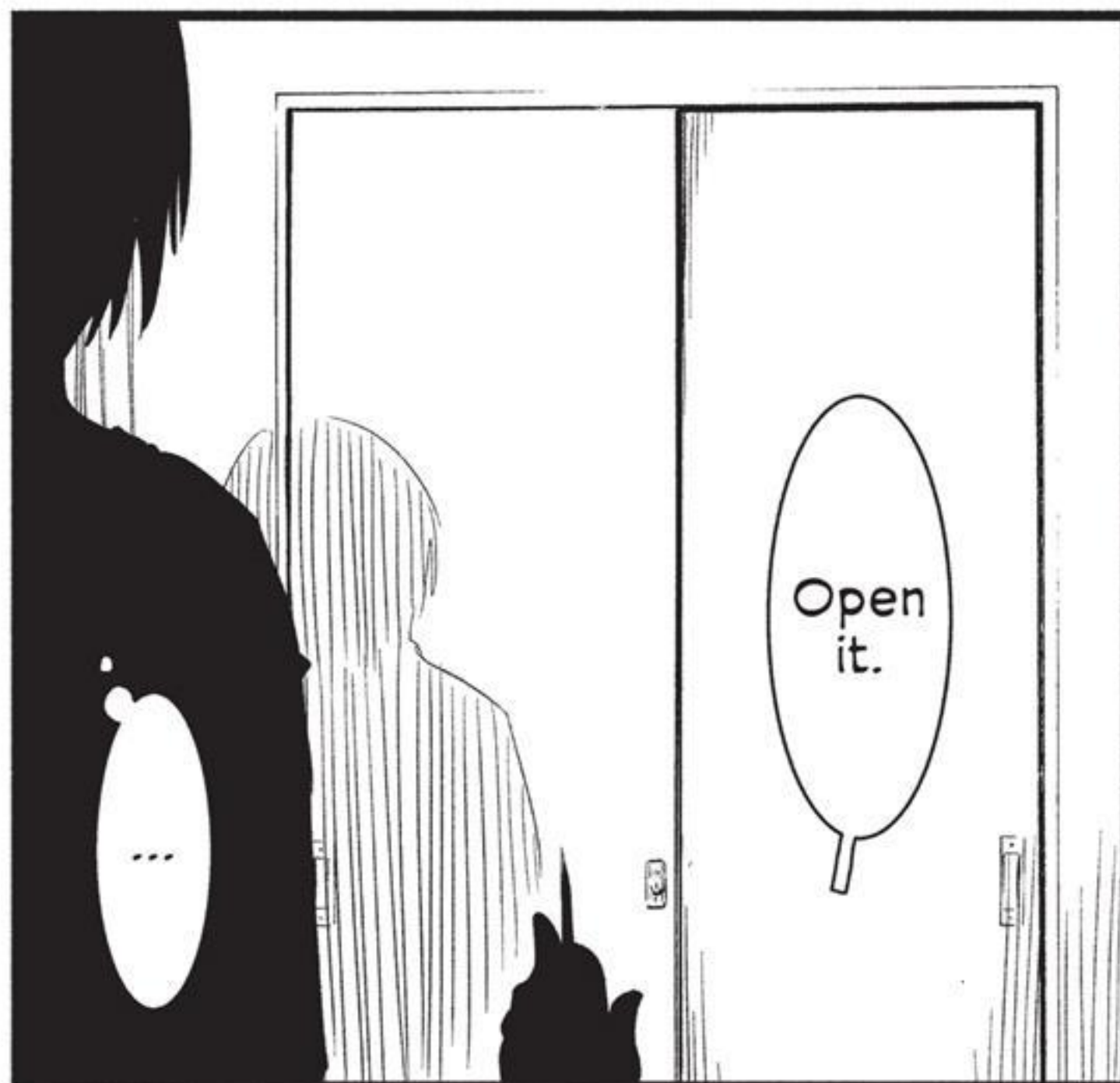




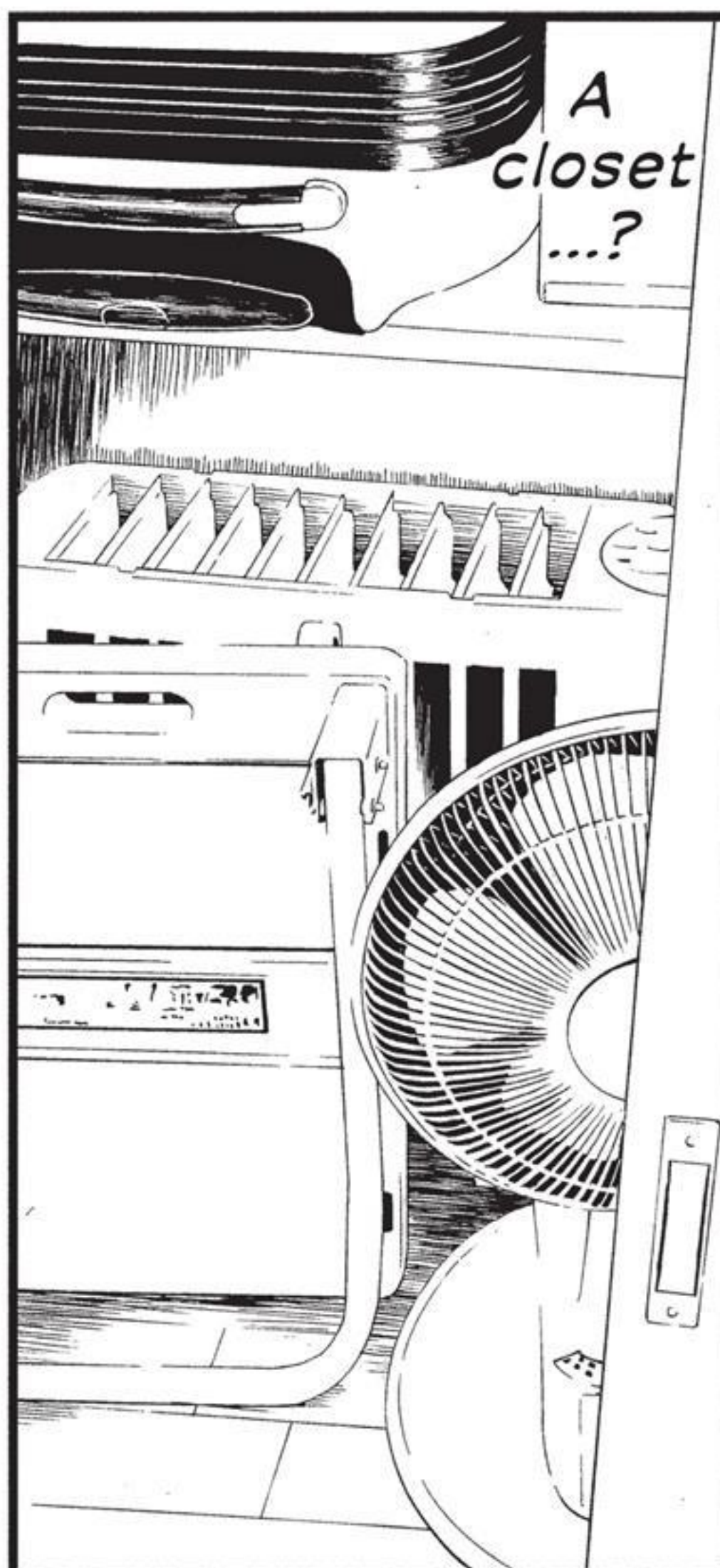














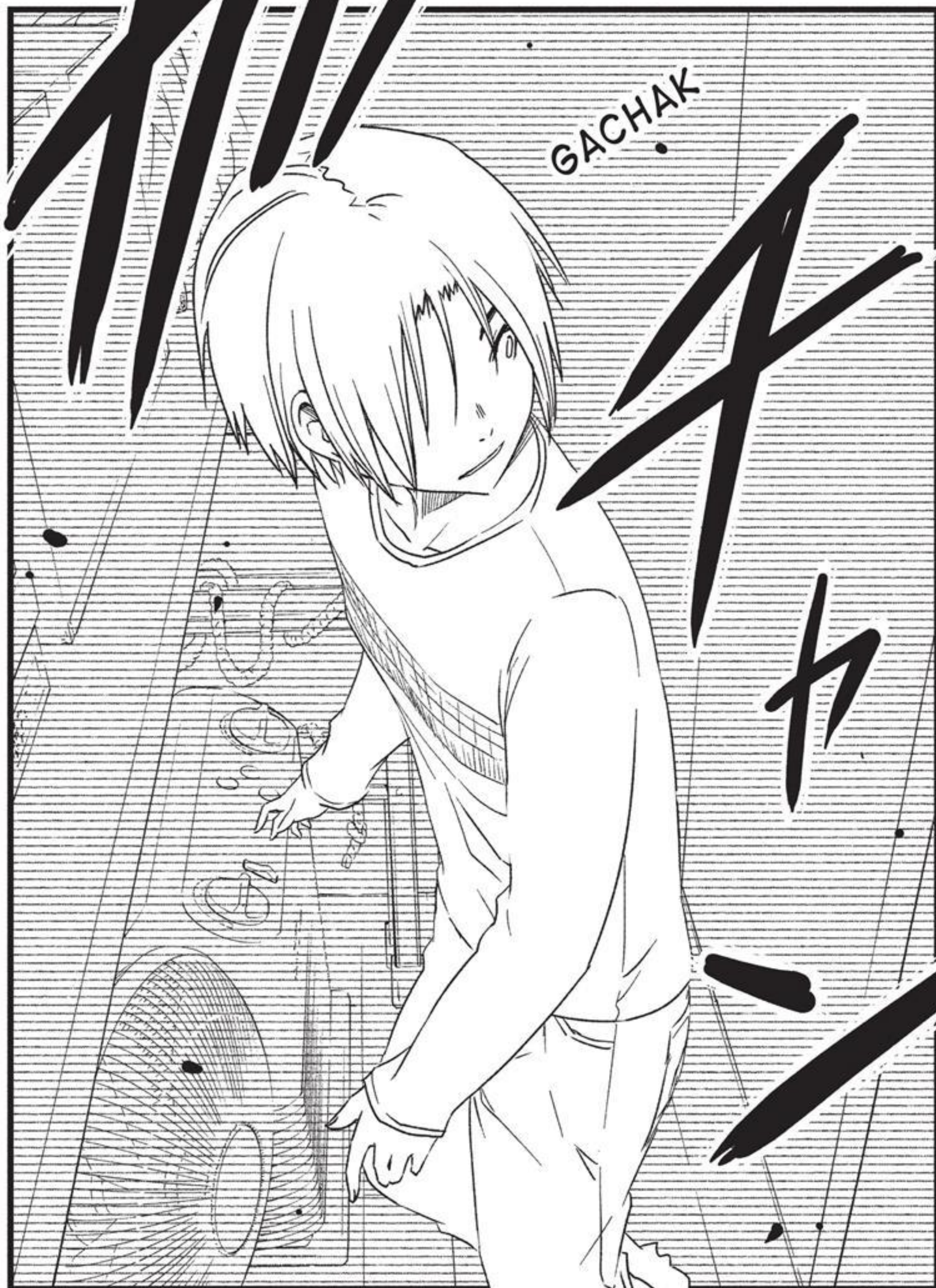


Huh  
...?

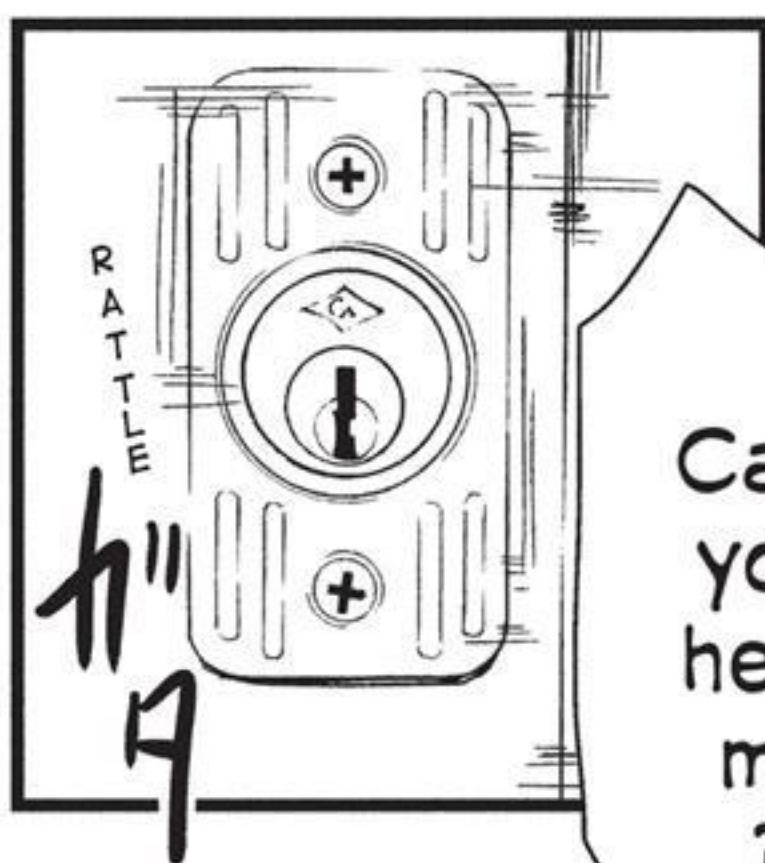
1107

BTAMM









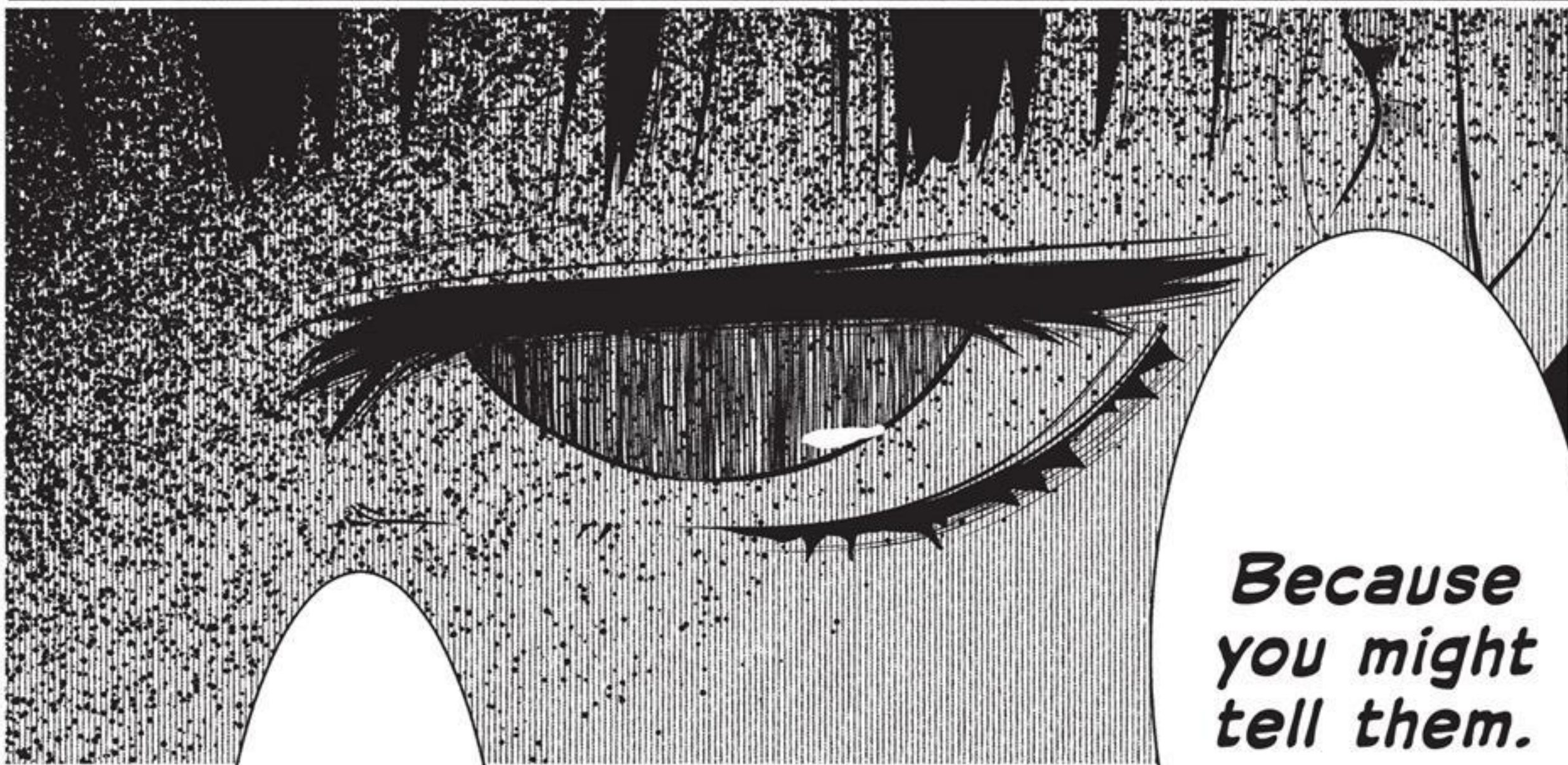
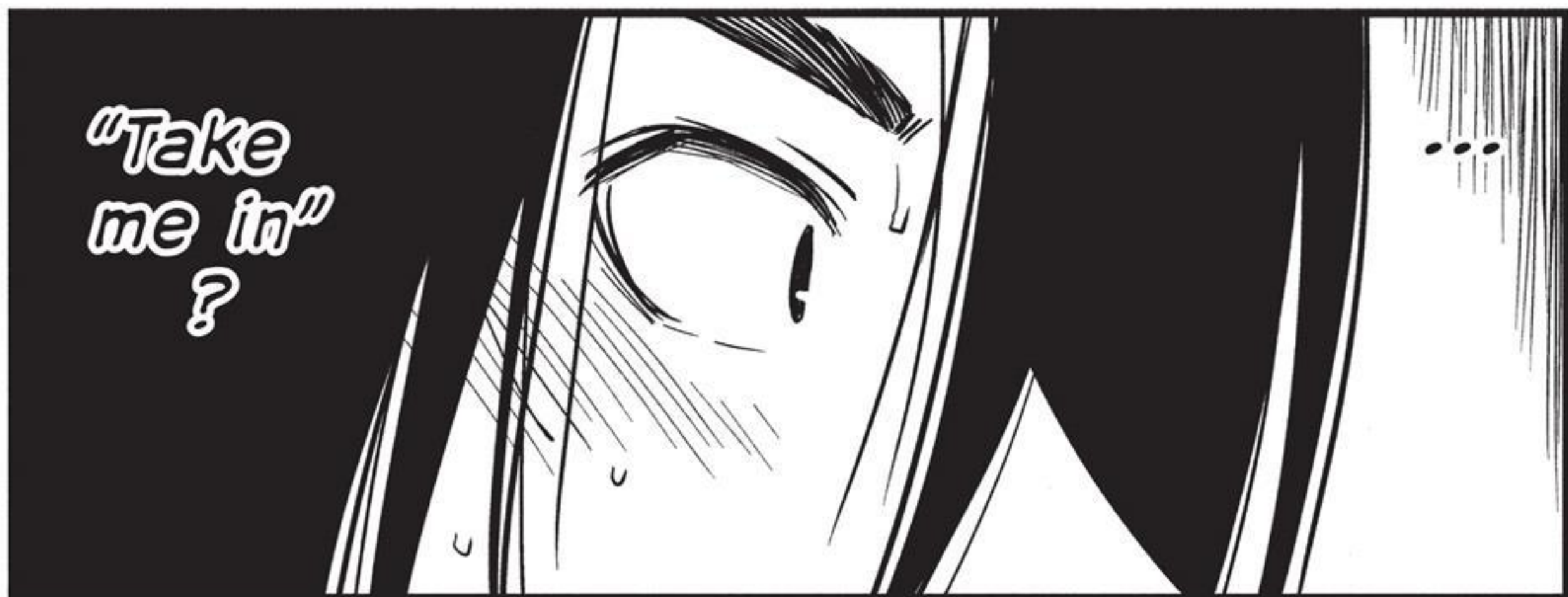




*So I  
have  
to do  
this.*

*I  
have  
to  
lock  
you  
away  
and  
take  
you  
in.*





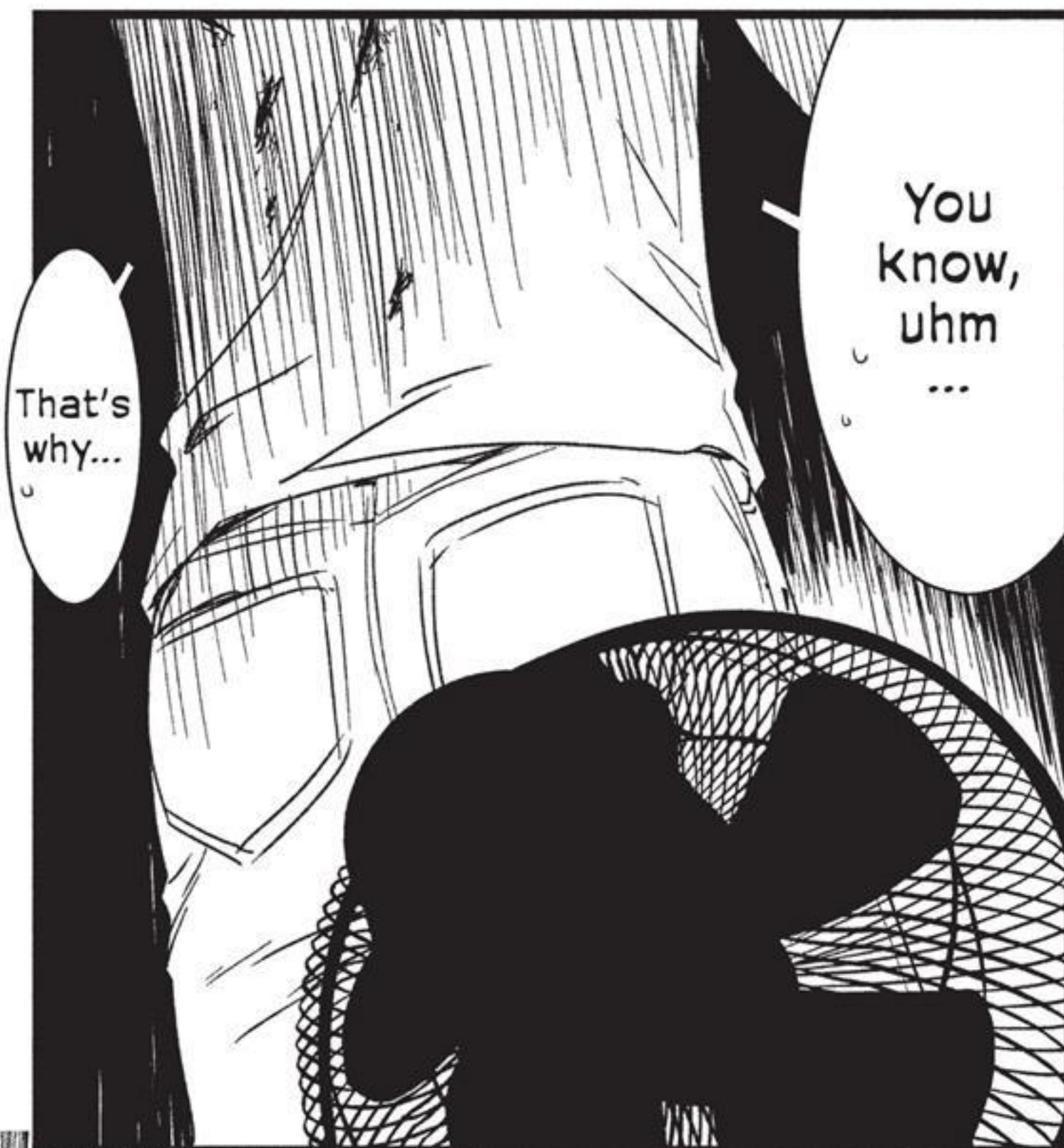












That's  
why...

You  
know,  
uhm  
...



S  
n  
i  
f  
f

Hey,  
no...  
I...

Well  
...

I  
don't  
get  
what's  
going  
on,  
so...

S  
n  
i  
f  
f

S  
n  
i  
f  
f



*She  
has me  
imprisoned...  
Why am I  
apologizing  
to her...?*

I'm  
sorry  
for...

yelling  
...

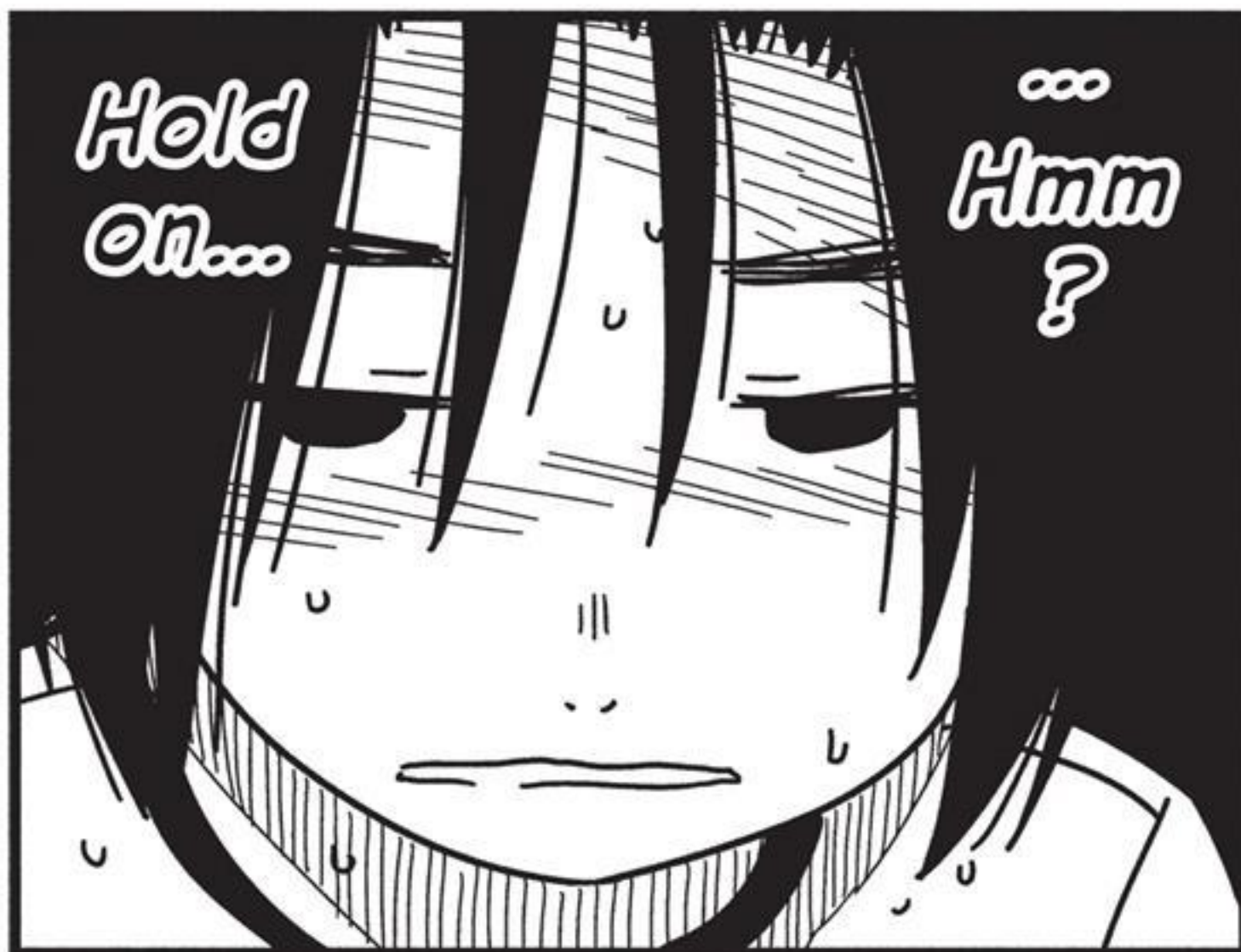
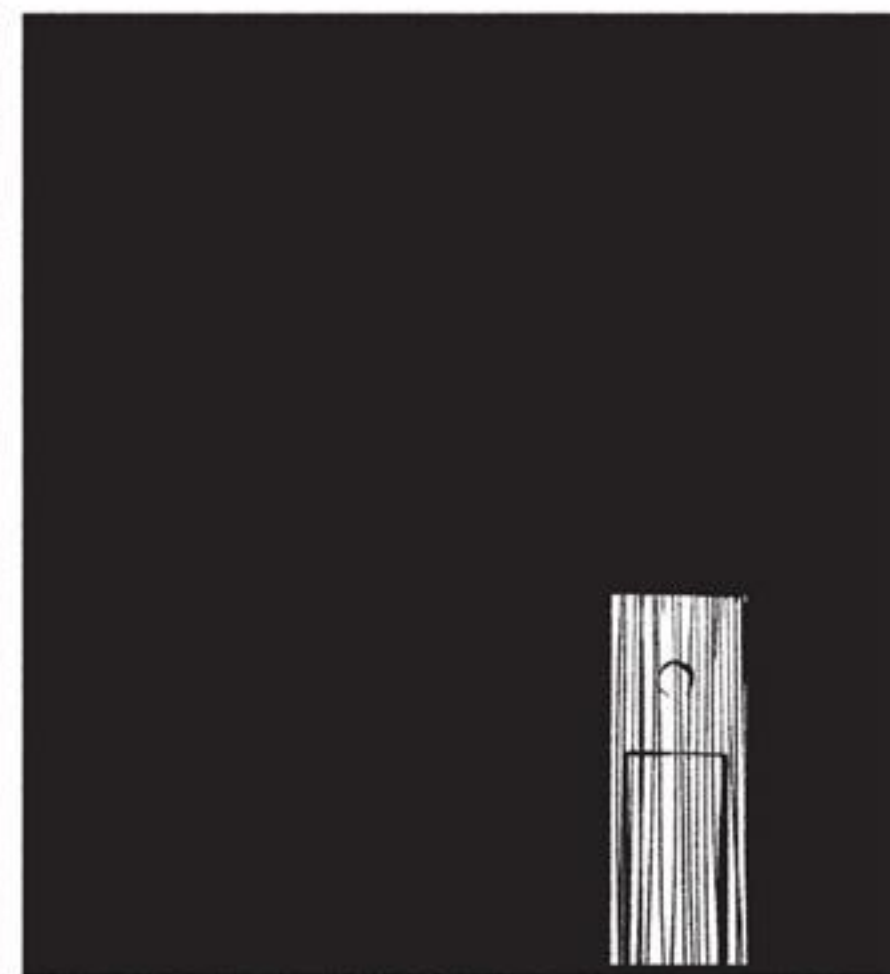


*Did she  
stop  
crying  
...?*



...  
...  
...









Was she  
pretending  
to cry just  
now...?!  
So she  
was testing  
me...?!?

Uhm  
...

BLUSH

かあ  
あ

Wait...  
what?  
No...  
Does  
that  
mean  
...

Hey,  
listen...  
Hold  
on...

Hey  
...



Say  
...

You're...  
still  
there,  
aren't  
you...?

KNOCK  
コッ

Hey  
...

U...?!  
コッ

KNOCK  
コッ

KNOCK  
コッ

Say  
something,  
please...?

じゅ  
ず  
: PLIP...

some-  
thing  
...



THP  
と  
THP  
と  
THP  
と  
...

!



Huh  
?

Foot-  
steps  
...?!  
:



how  
it  
began  
...

ト  
ン  
BADEN

ト  
ン  
BADEN

ト  
ン  
BADEN

U...

And  
that's

ト  
ン  
BADEN







My  
week

of  
living as  
an actual  
prisoner.

h  
BADUM

h  
BADUM

h  
BADUM



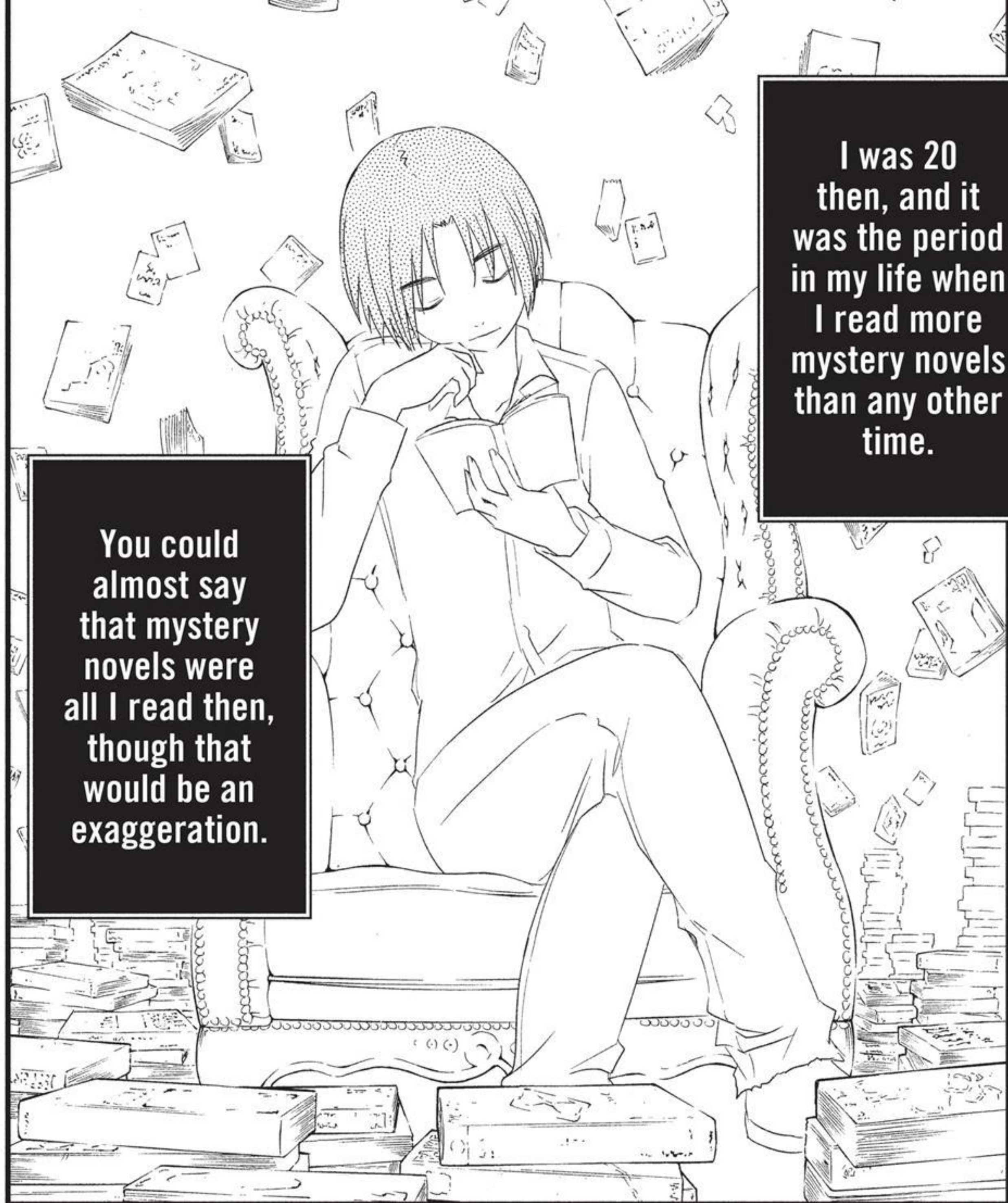


2013.8









**You could almost say that mystery novels were all I read then, though that would be an exaggeration.**

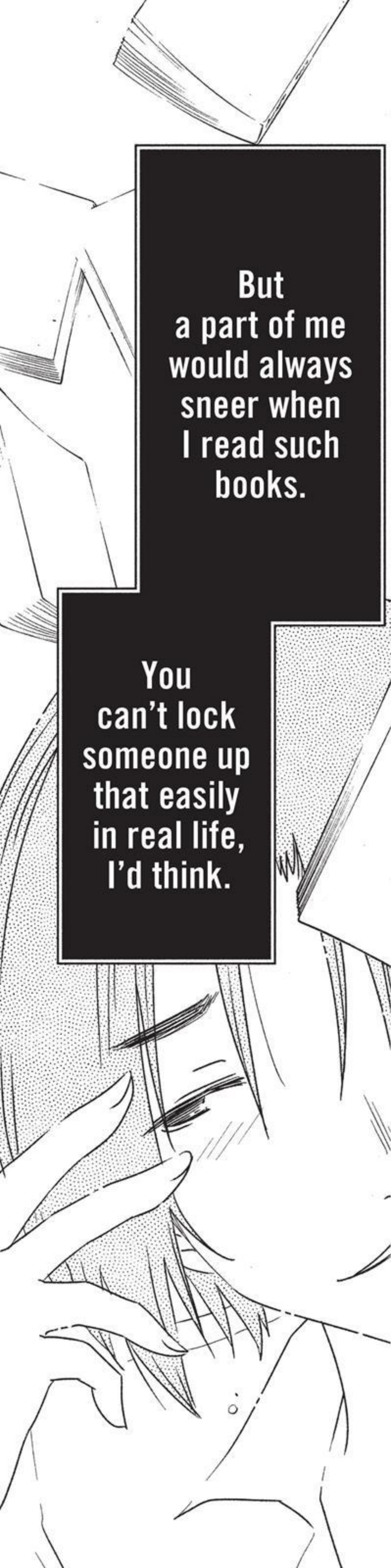
**I was 20 then, and it was the period in my life when I read more mystery novels than any other time.**

**I read so voraciously, that sadly, I barely remember any of the content of those books at all...**

**I read more foreign mystery novels than Japanese ones.**

**I was at an age when I wanted to show off; not necessarily to others, but to myself.**





But  
a part of me  
would always  
sneer when  
I read such  
books.

You  
can't lock  
someone up  
that easily  
in real life,  
I'd think.

Unlike  
more direct  
methods,  
such as  
beating  
someone or  
poisoning  
them, it  
requires no  
physical  
strength,

And it's also  
a method that  
leaves the  
killer with a  
lesser sense  
of guilt... at  
least, I think  
that's how I  
recall it being  
described.

there's an  
oft-seen  
method of  
murder in  
the world of  
mystery  
novels:

In  
any  
case,



imprisoning  
the victim  
in a locked  
room—a safe,  
for example—  
until they  
suffocated.





And  
now

# 監禁

Hour 1

It  
almost felt  
like I was  
reaping  
what I'd  
sown.

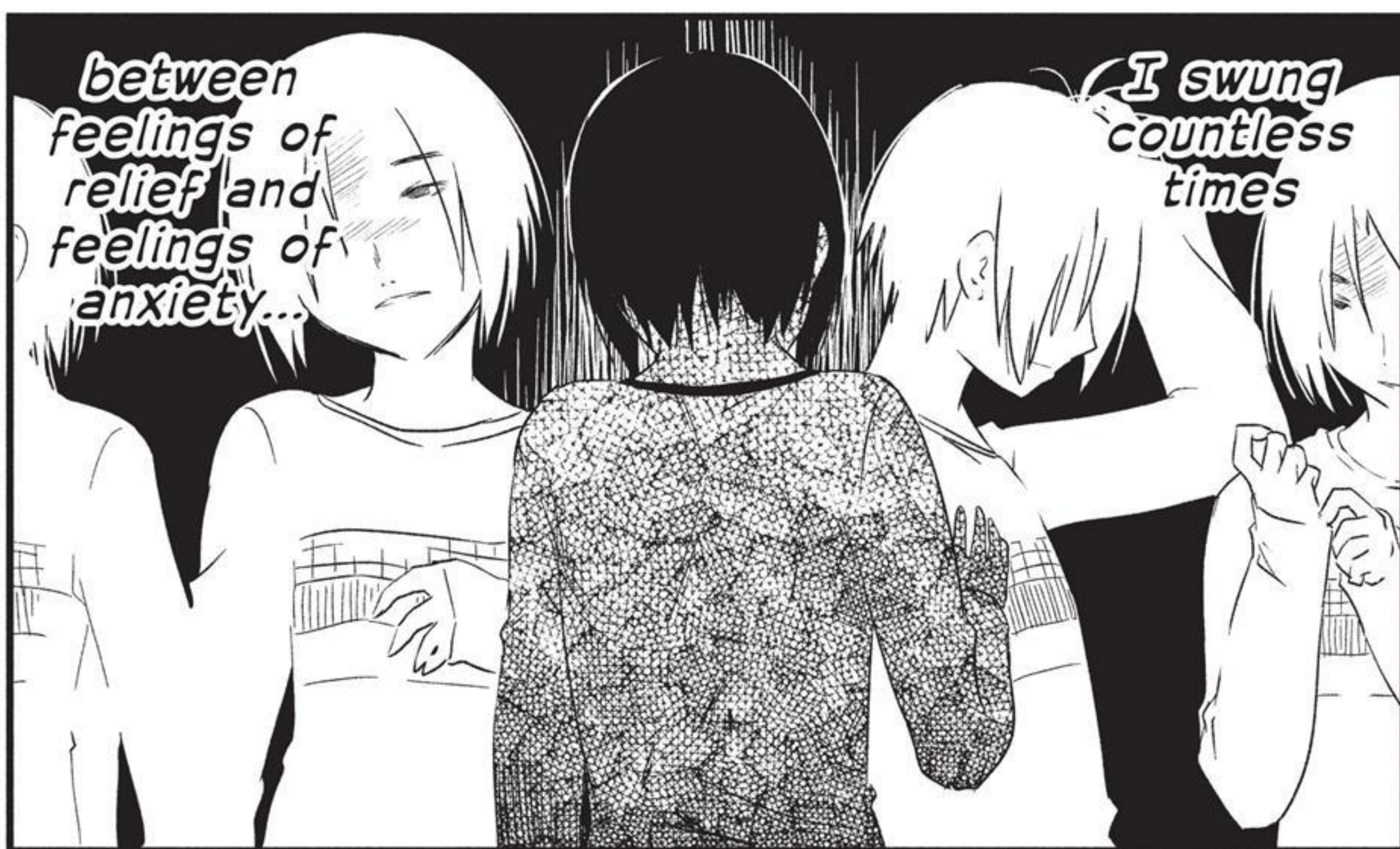
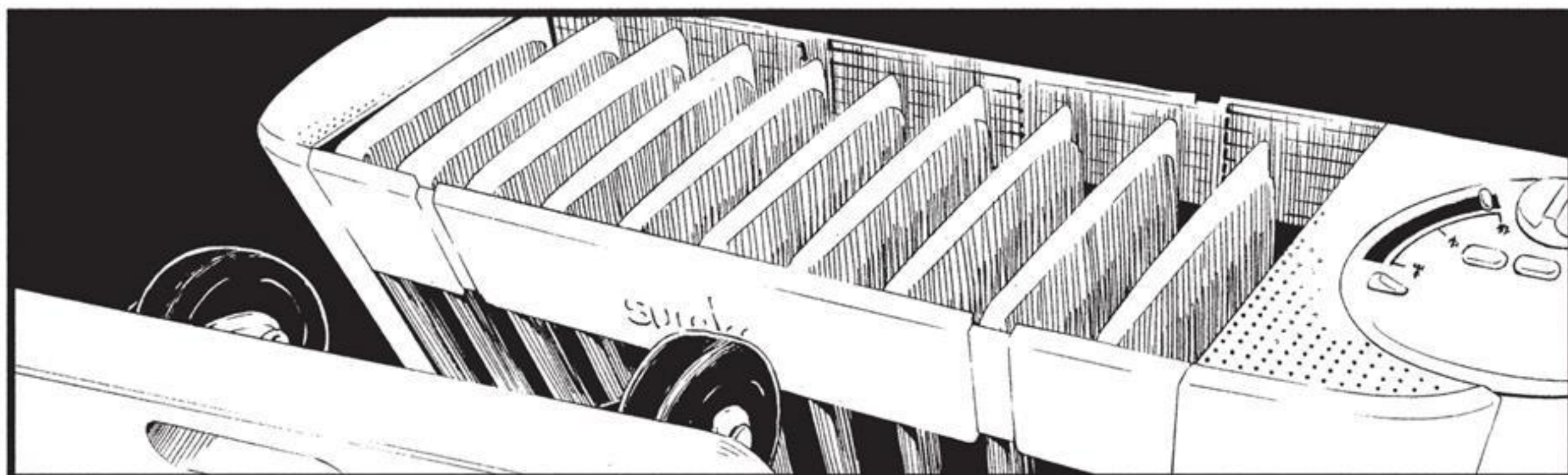
I found  
myself  
getting  
locked up  
just that  
easily.

of imprisonment.

# 時間









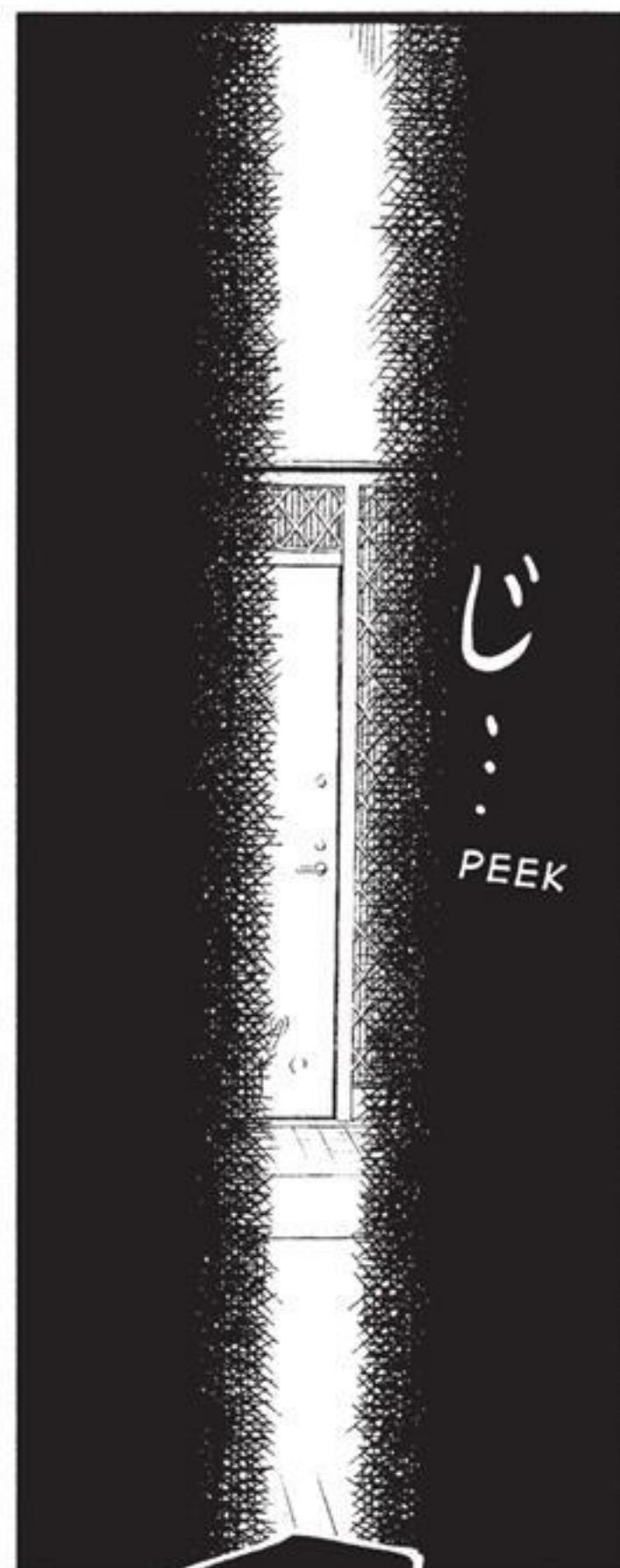


WHUNK  
カッ



...Yep.

Looks  
like U  
isn't  
coming  
back  
here.



じ  
...  
PEEK

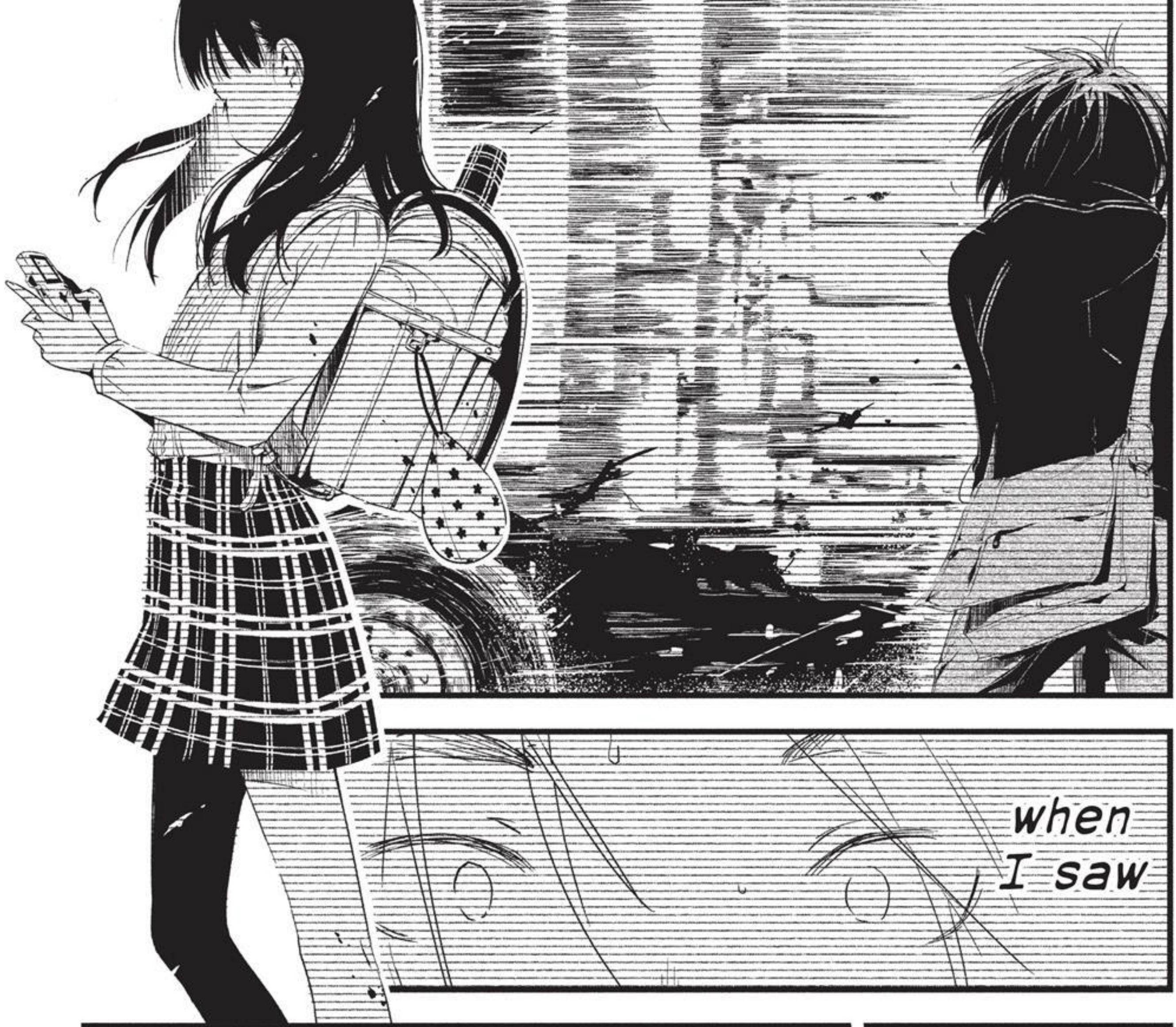


That  
day  
...

ズッ  
ZHFF

ZHFF  
ズッ









*She had realized.*



ZHFF

は

*She knew I had seen her for who she really is.*



*she saw me, too.*



GASP

は

... Oh.



*...I guess that's what's happened here.*

*That's why she decided to silence me this way.*



And  
she's  
desperate  
to  
cover  
up that  
part of  
herself

...

as  
she  
lives  
her  
life

GRIP

So  
she  
knows

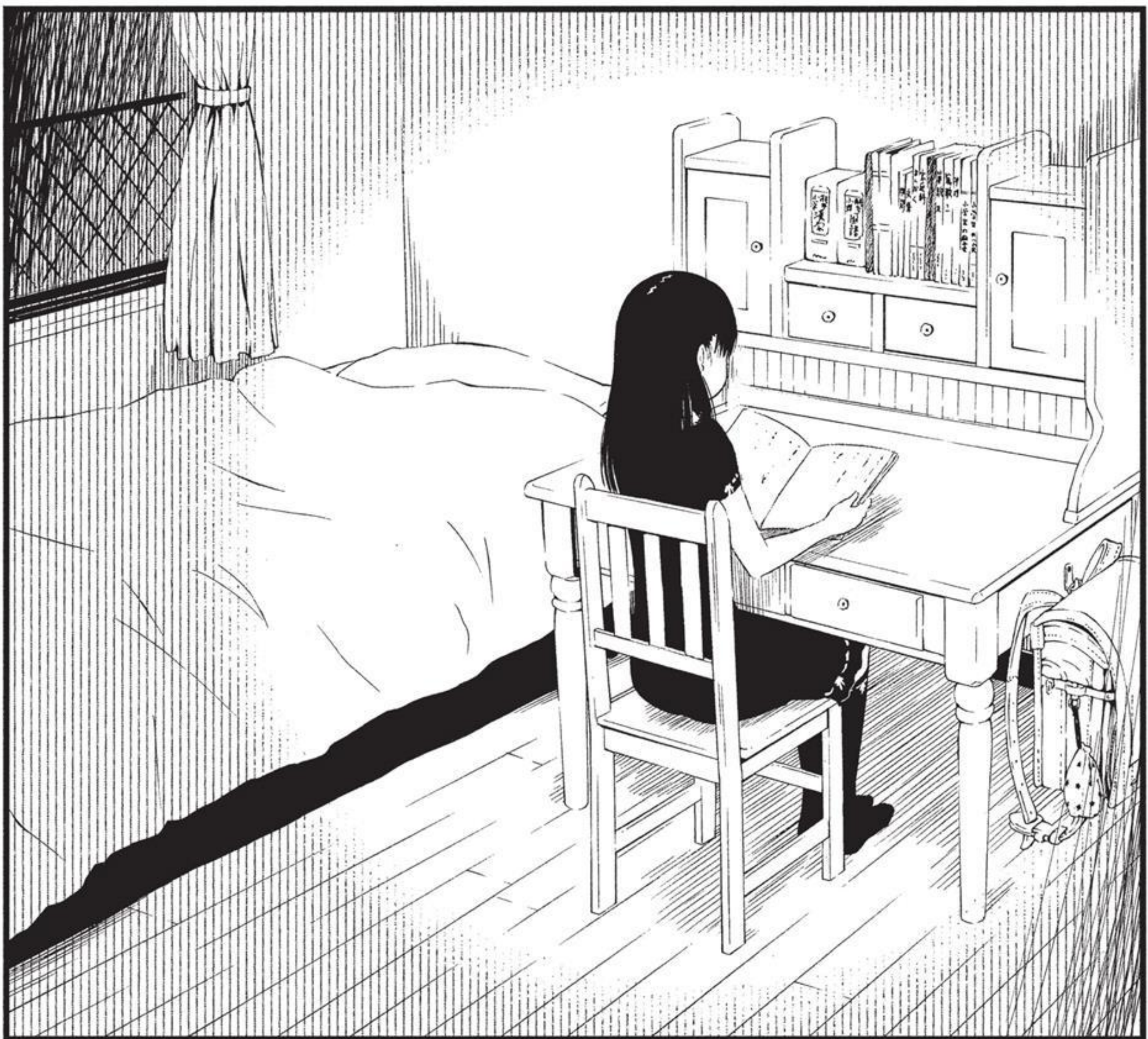
...

Because  
you might  
tell them.

Tell  
them  
who I  
really  
am.



*to the  
point where  
she feels  
the need  
to imprison  
anyone who  
witnesses  
it...*







SHKK



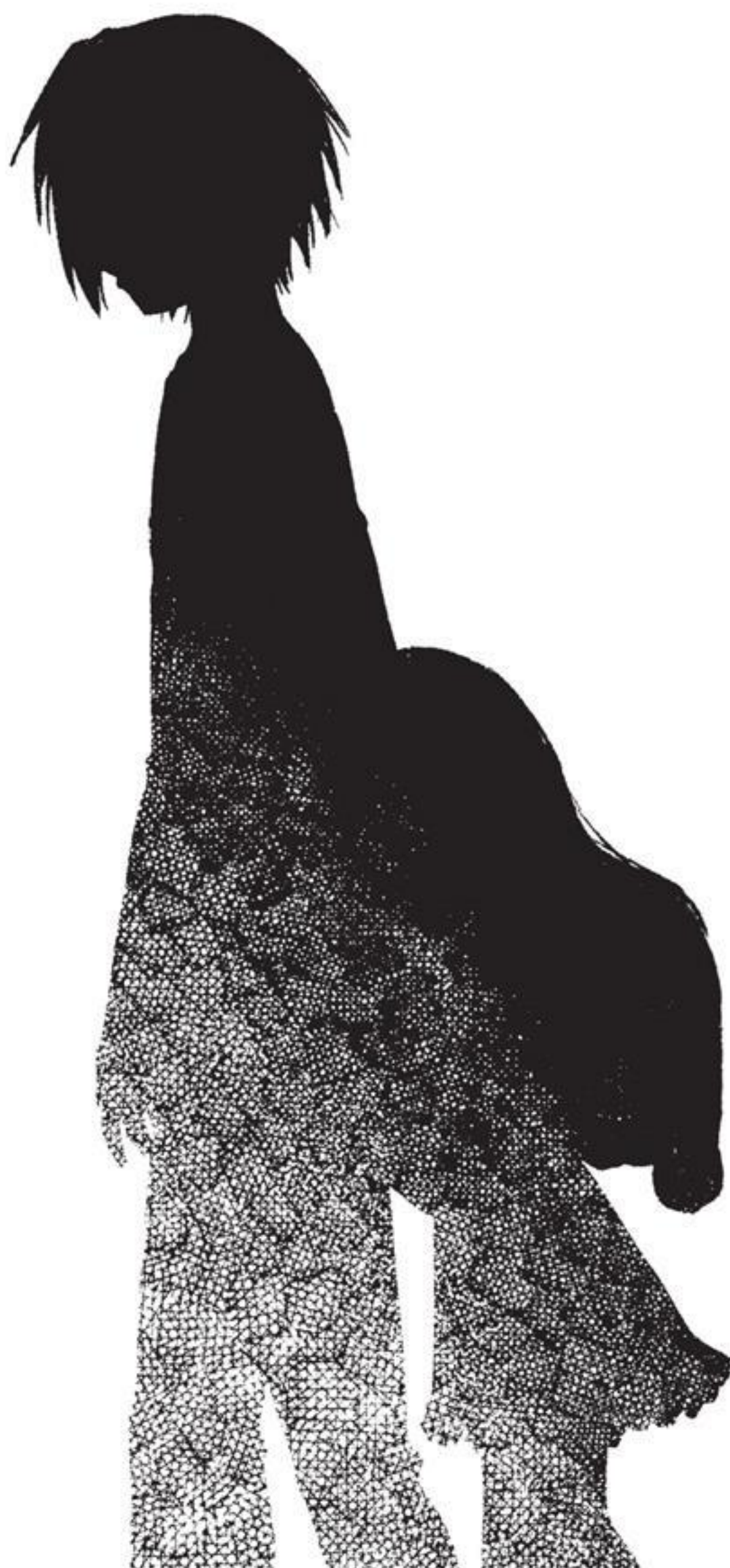
But ...

RUSTLE

it's  
almost  
certain  
that I can  
stage an  
escape.

As long  
as I  
have  
this  
thing,





**The  
shallow  
thinking  
of a  
child...**

**This story  
isn't going to  
go like some  
piece of pulp  
fiction, or  
what is now  
known as a  
"light novel."**



**It's  
fundamentally  
impossible  
for a grade  
schooler  
to kidnap  
someone.**





a girl  
with a  
messed-  
up head.

U was  
by no  
means a  
beast,

nor was  
she a  
monster.

She  
was  
just

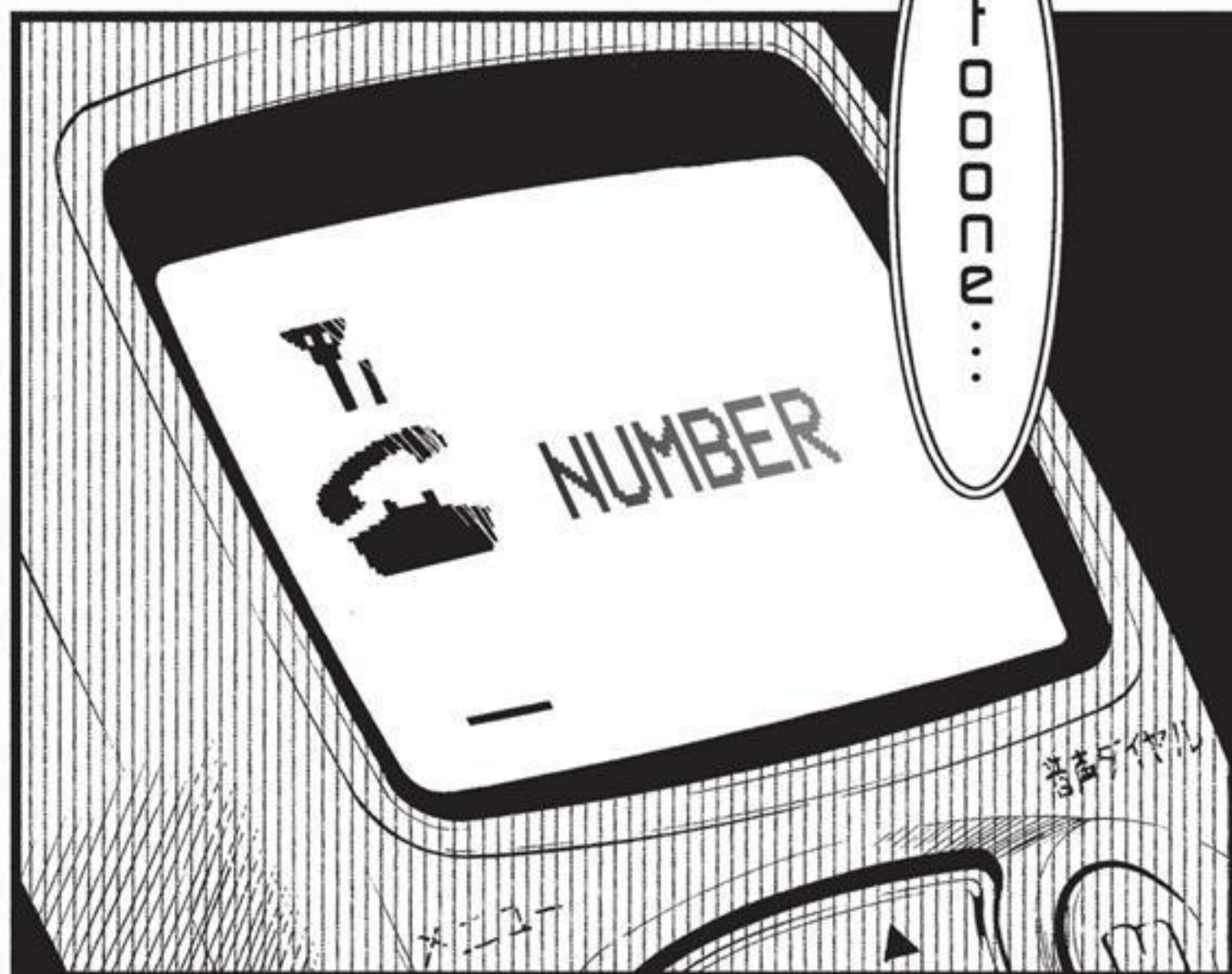
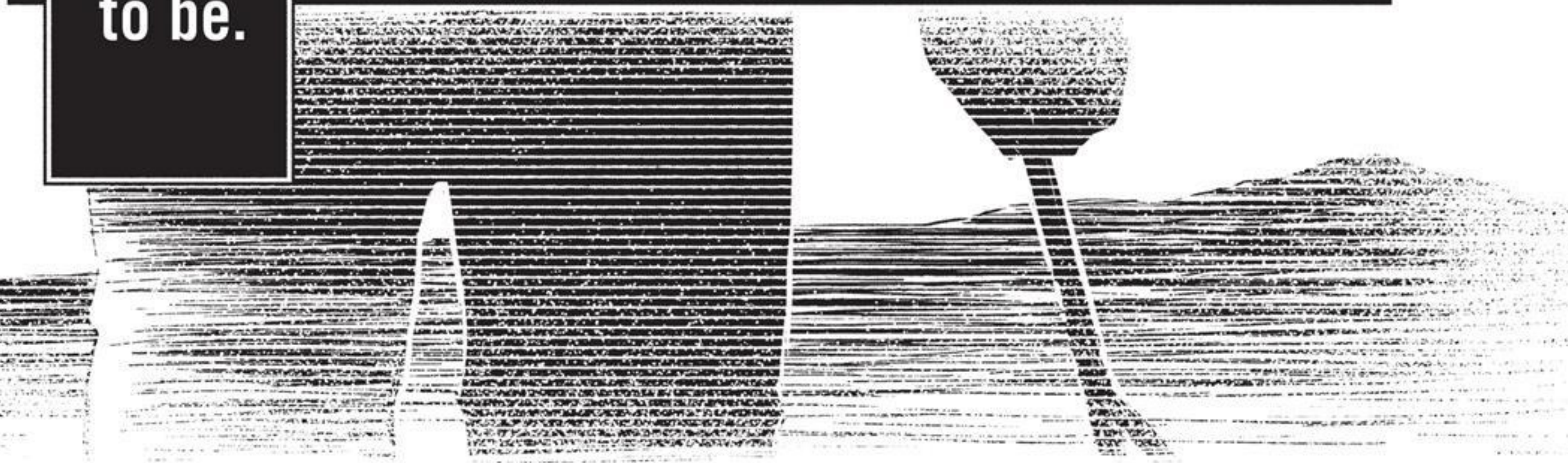




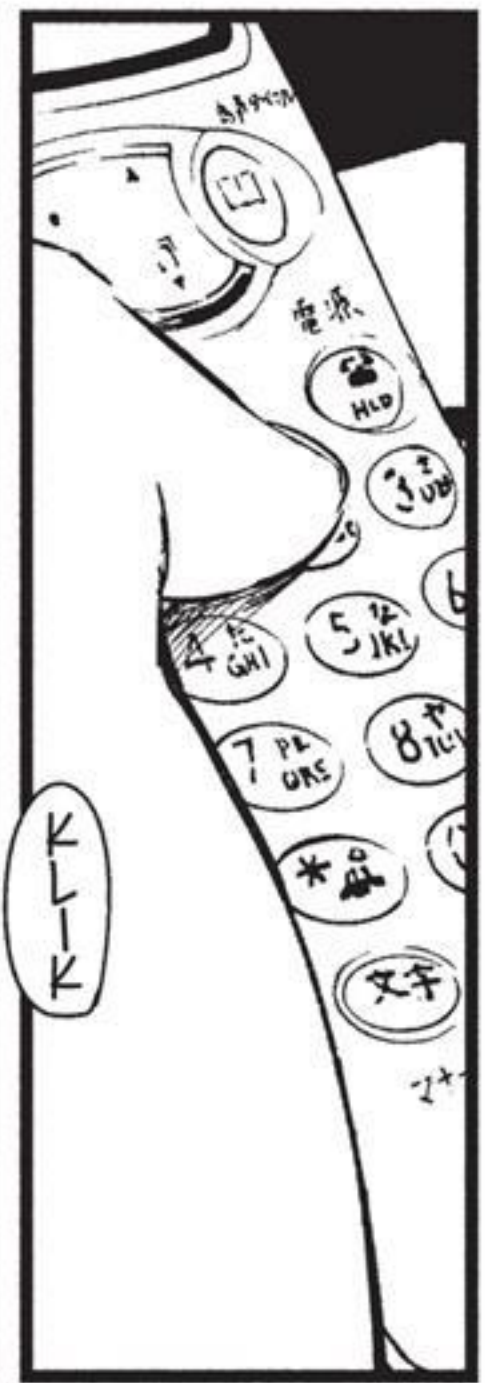
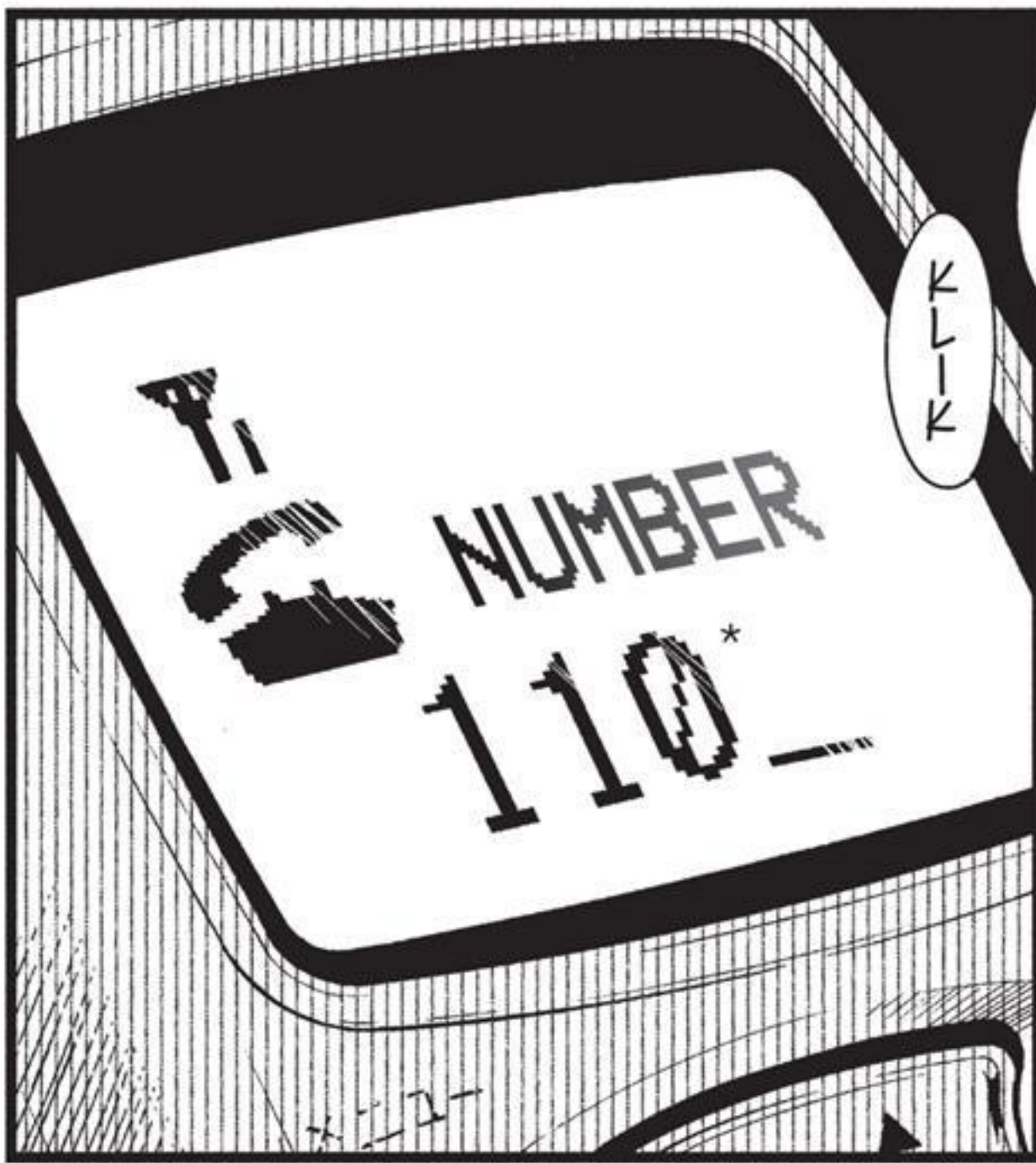
I used  
to be.

Just  
like

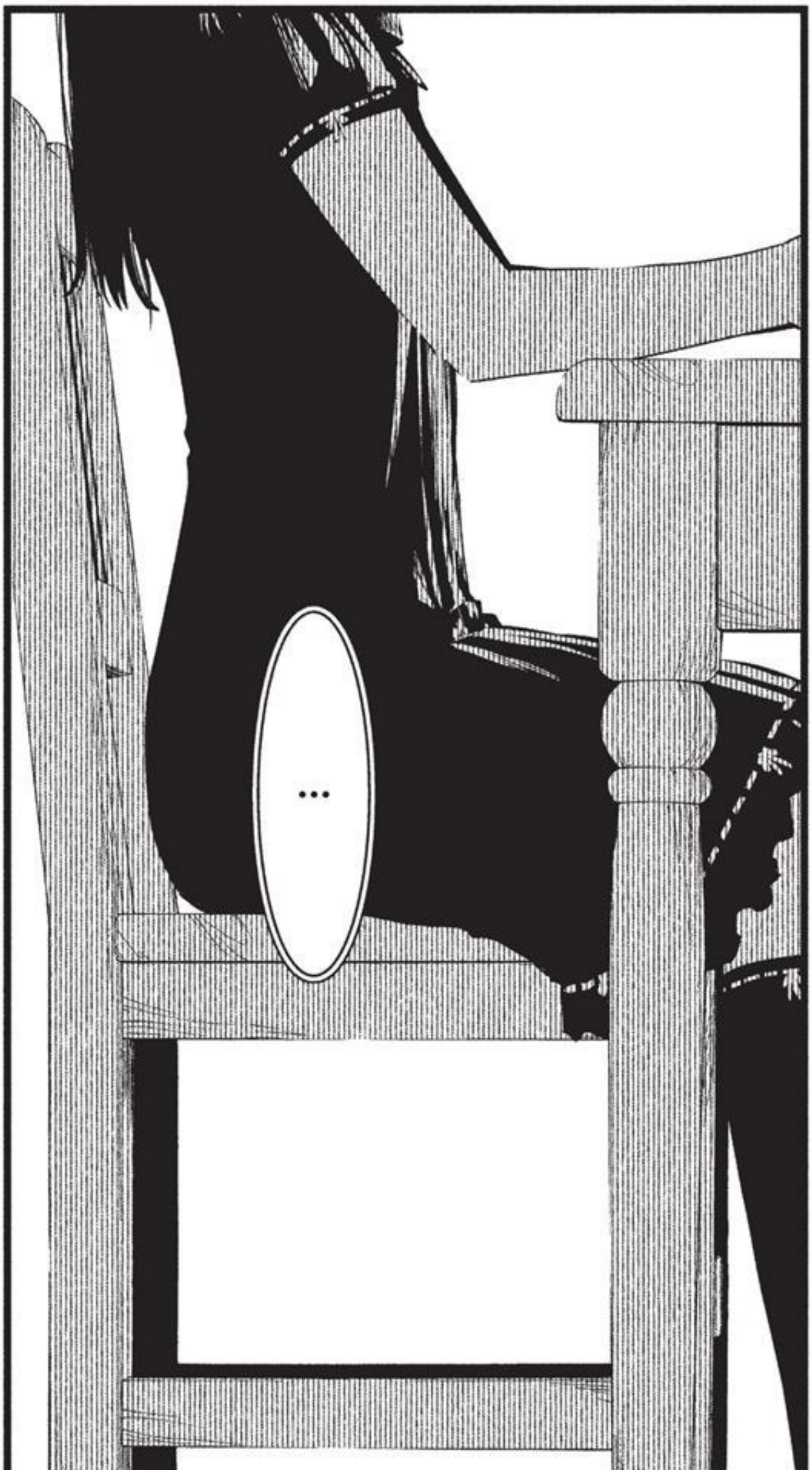
A child  
with a  
mind that  
invited  
pity.



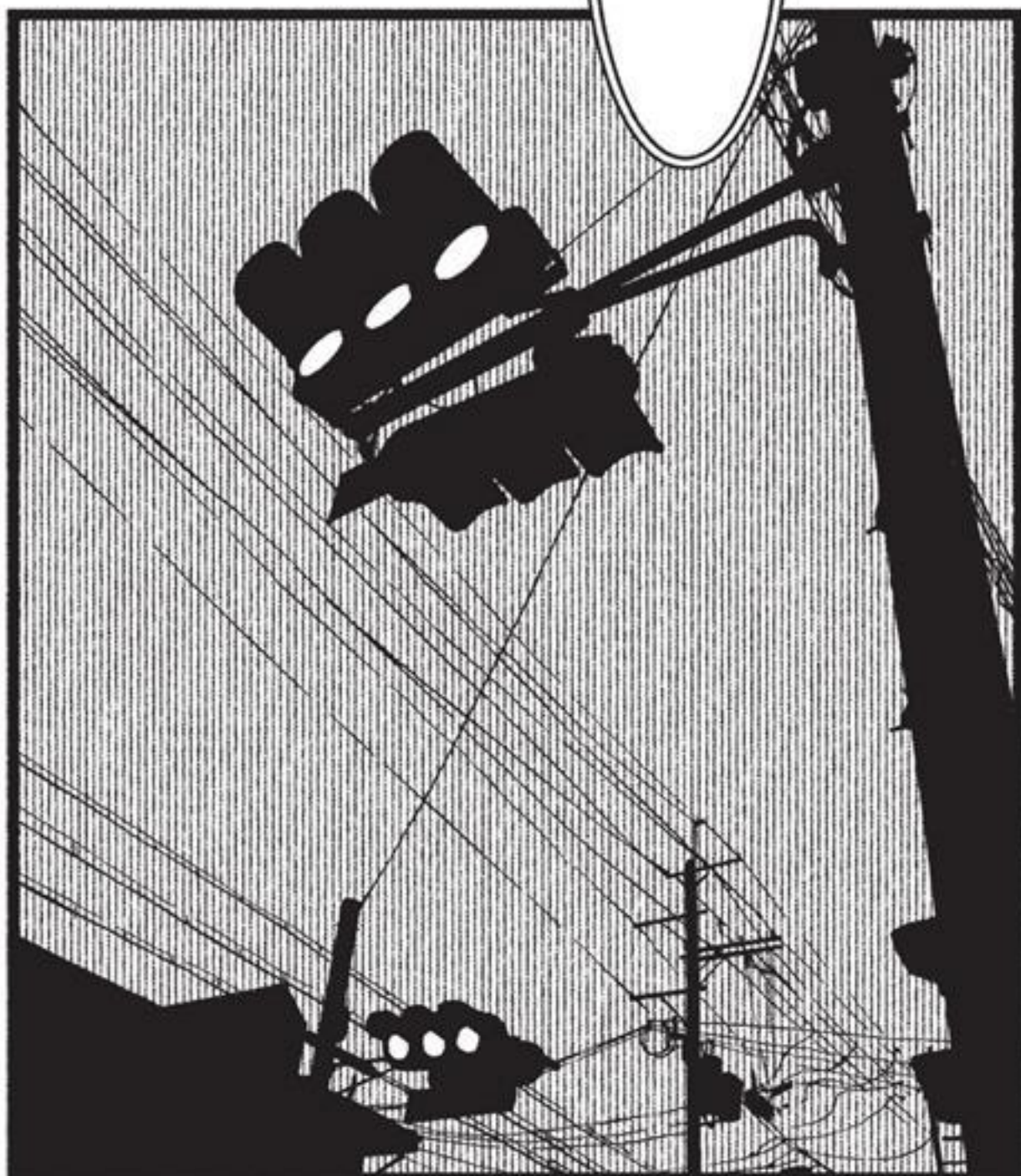




\*110 (Police)







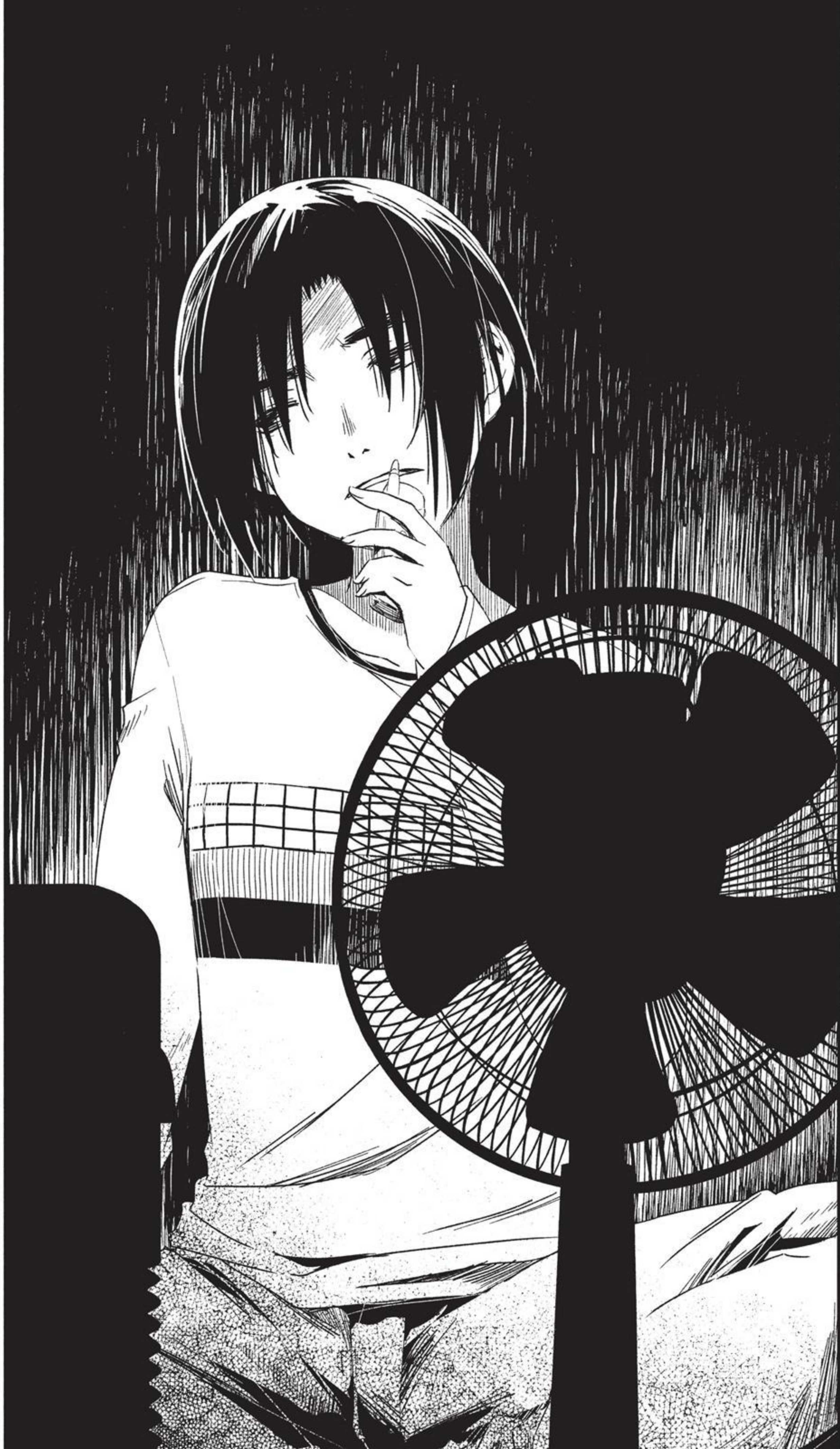




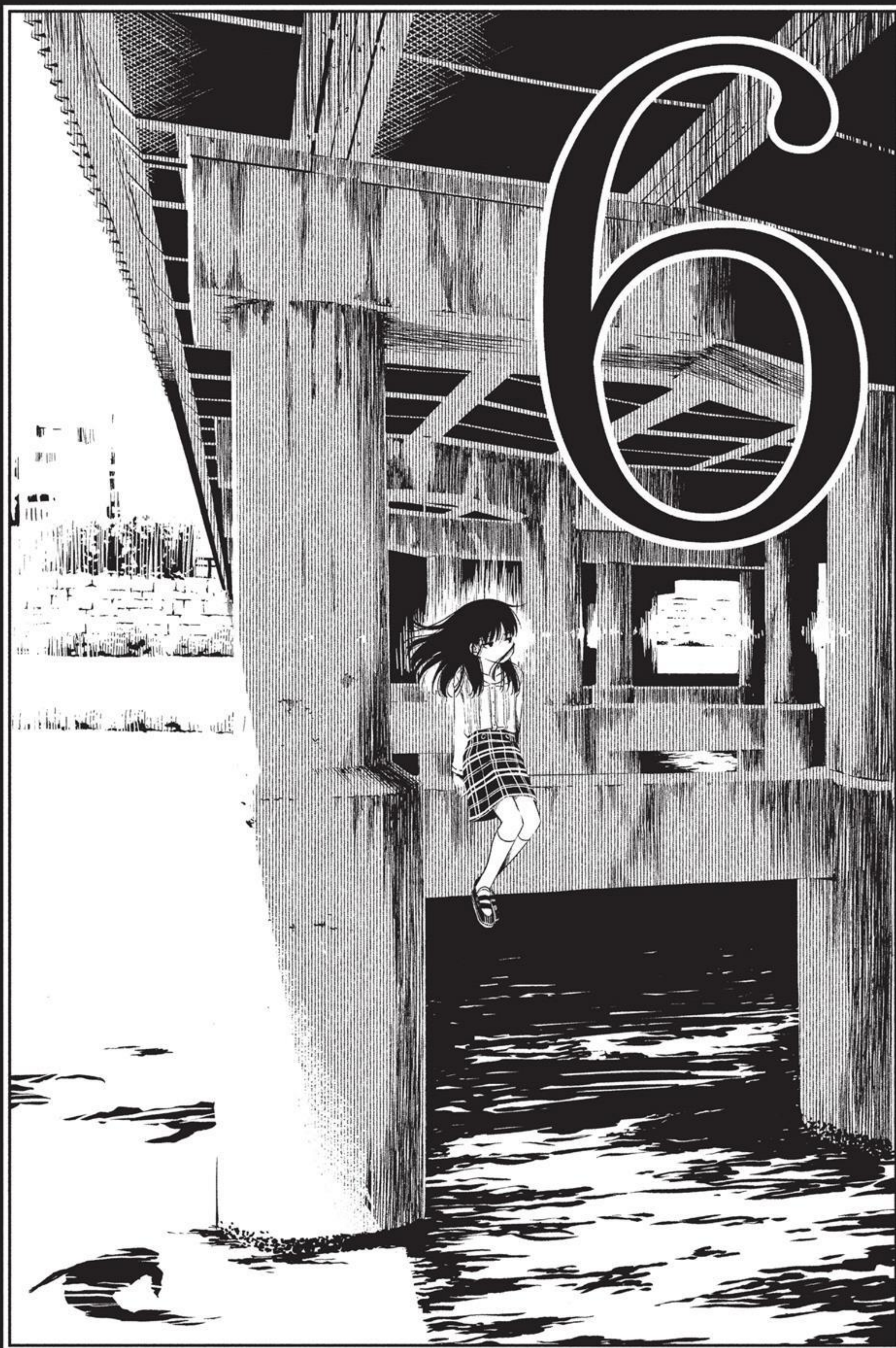
KLIK-K

CHALLENGED











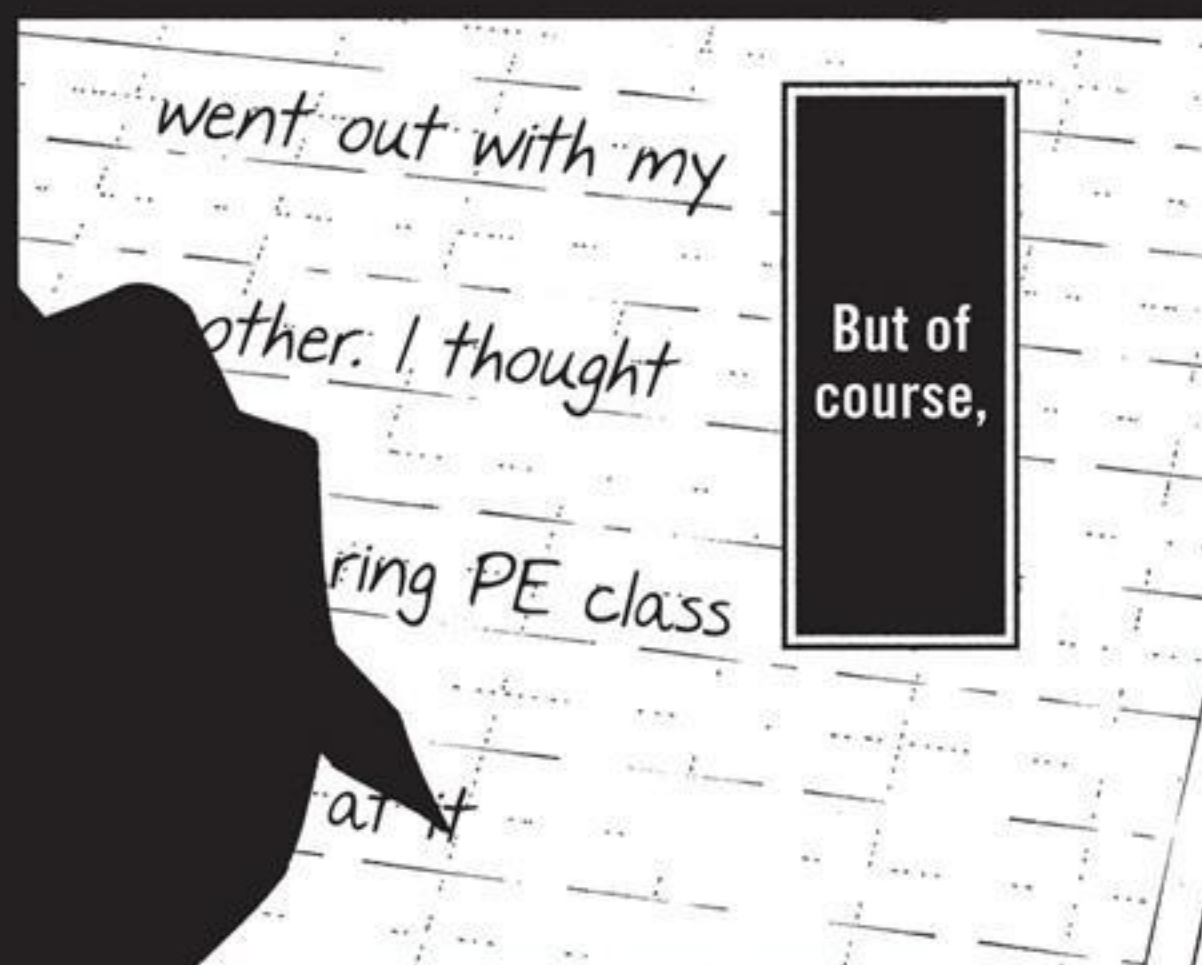


supposedly,  
you'll be  
allowed  
to behave  
however  
you want.

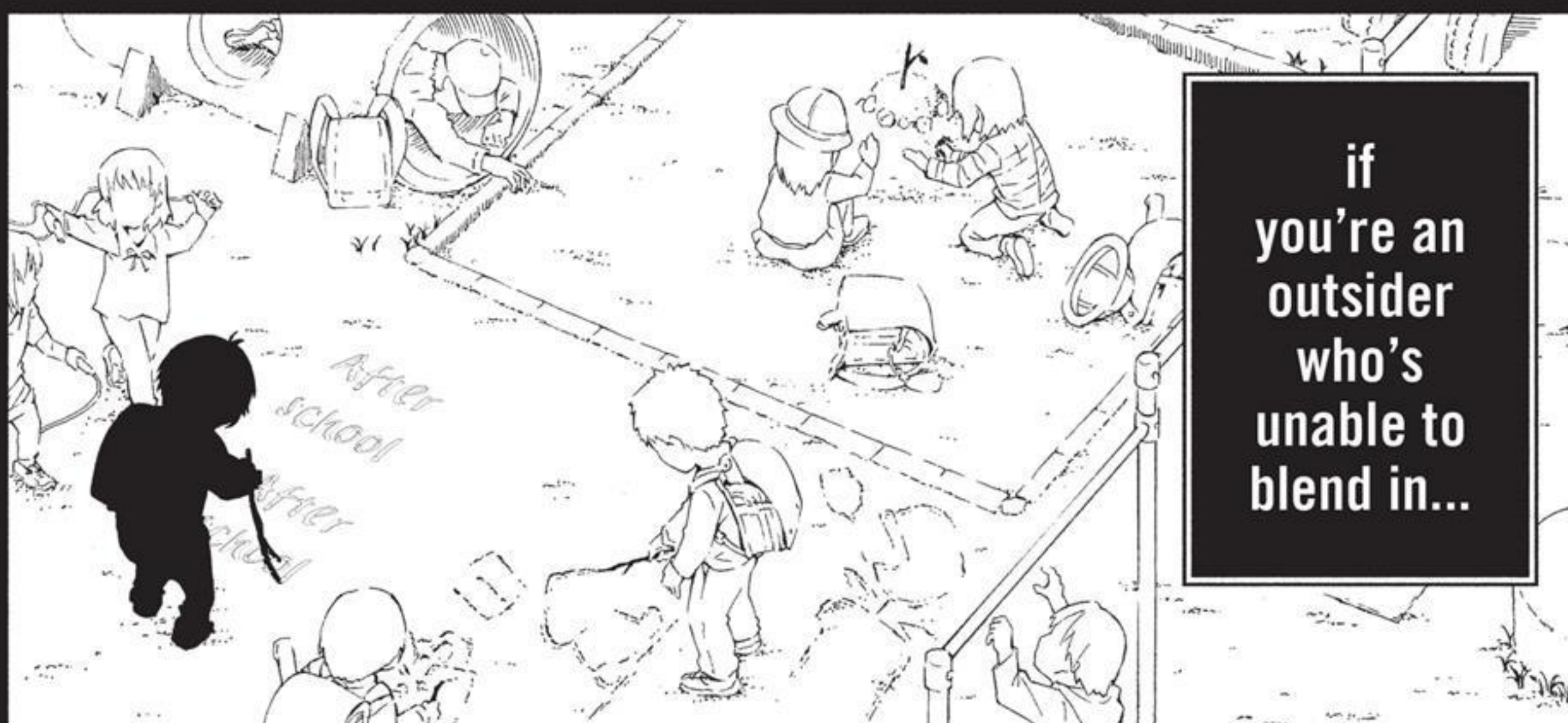
So long as  
you don't  
cause  
trouble to  
others,



as  
far as  
society's  
con-  
cerned,

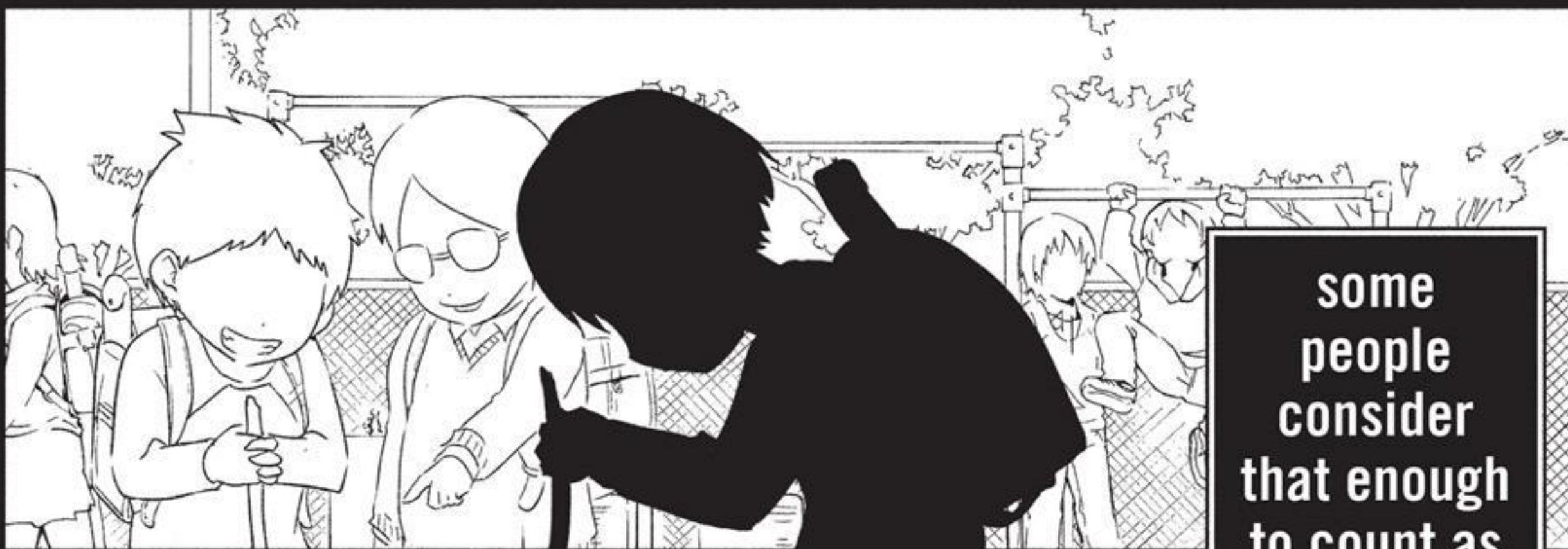


But of  
course,



if  
you're an  
outsider  
who's  
unable to  
blend in...



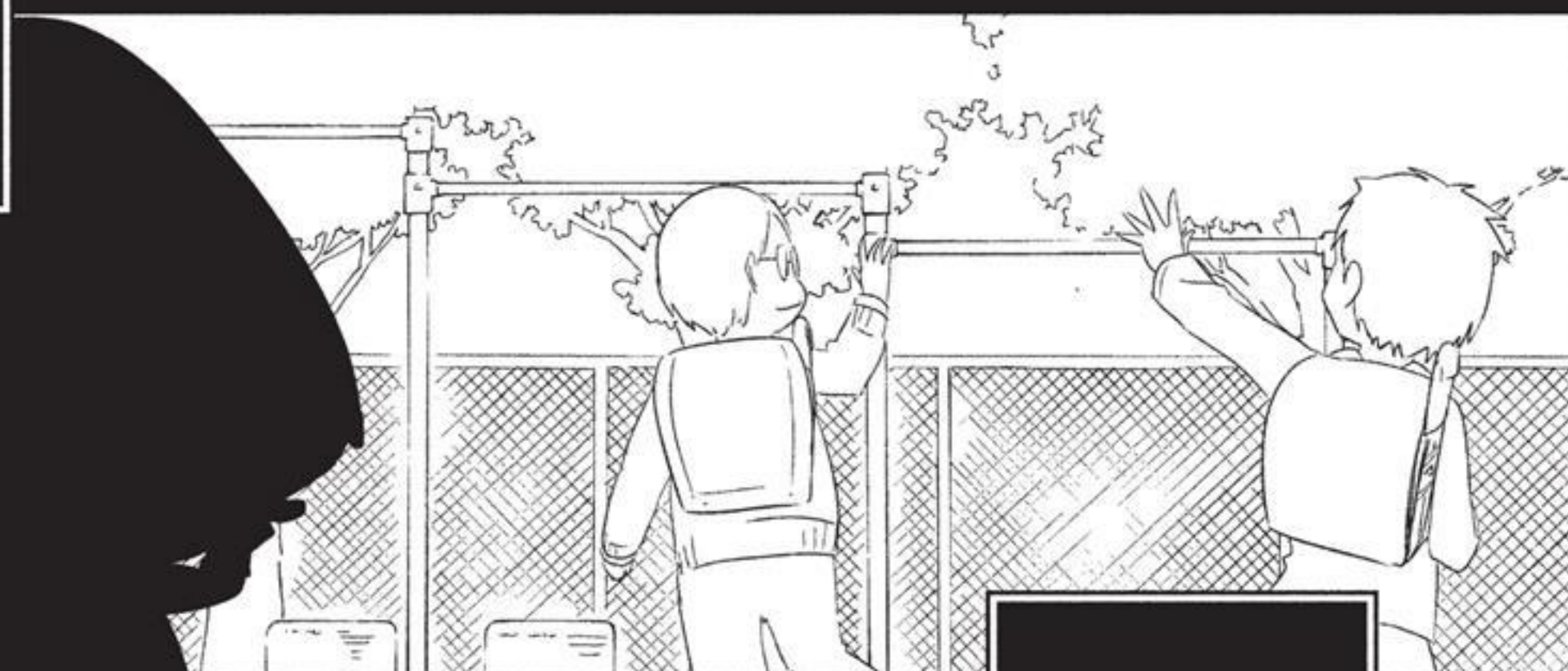
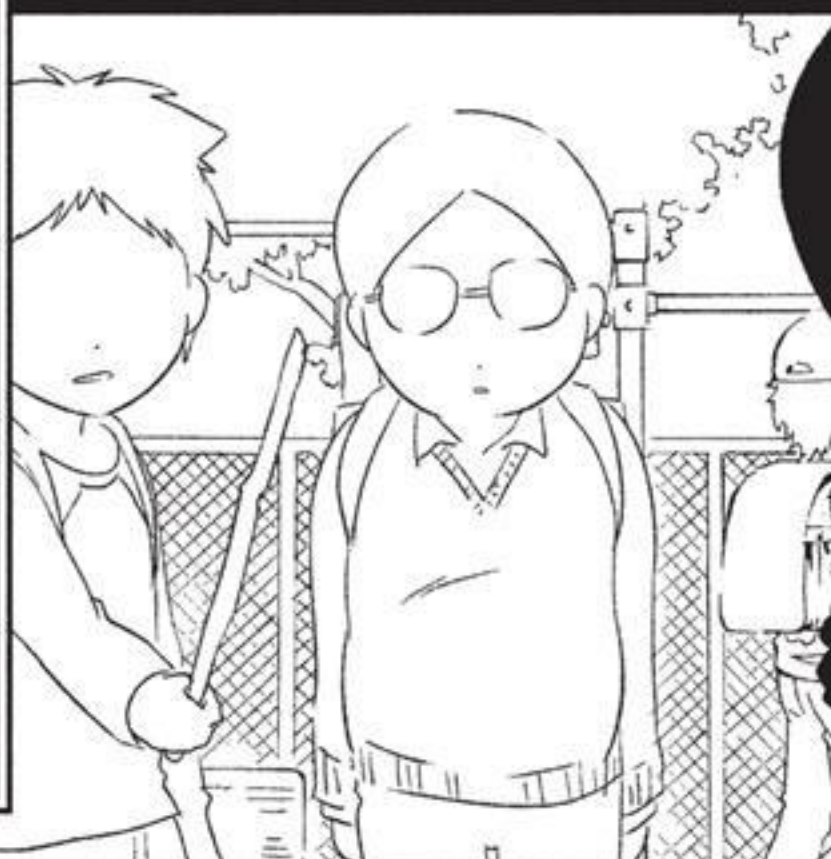


some  
people  
consider  
that enough  
to count as  
“causing  
trouble.”



I'm  
constantly  
trying to  
show that I  
understand  
this fact,

so  
please,  
won't  
you please  
pardon me  
for that?

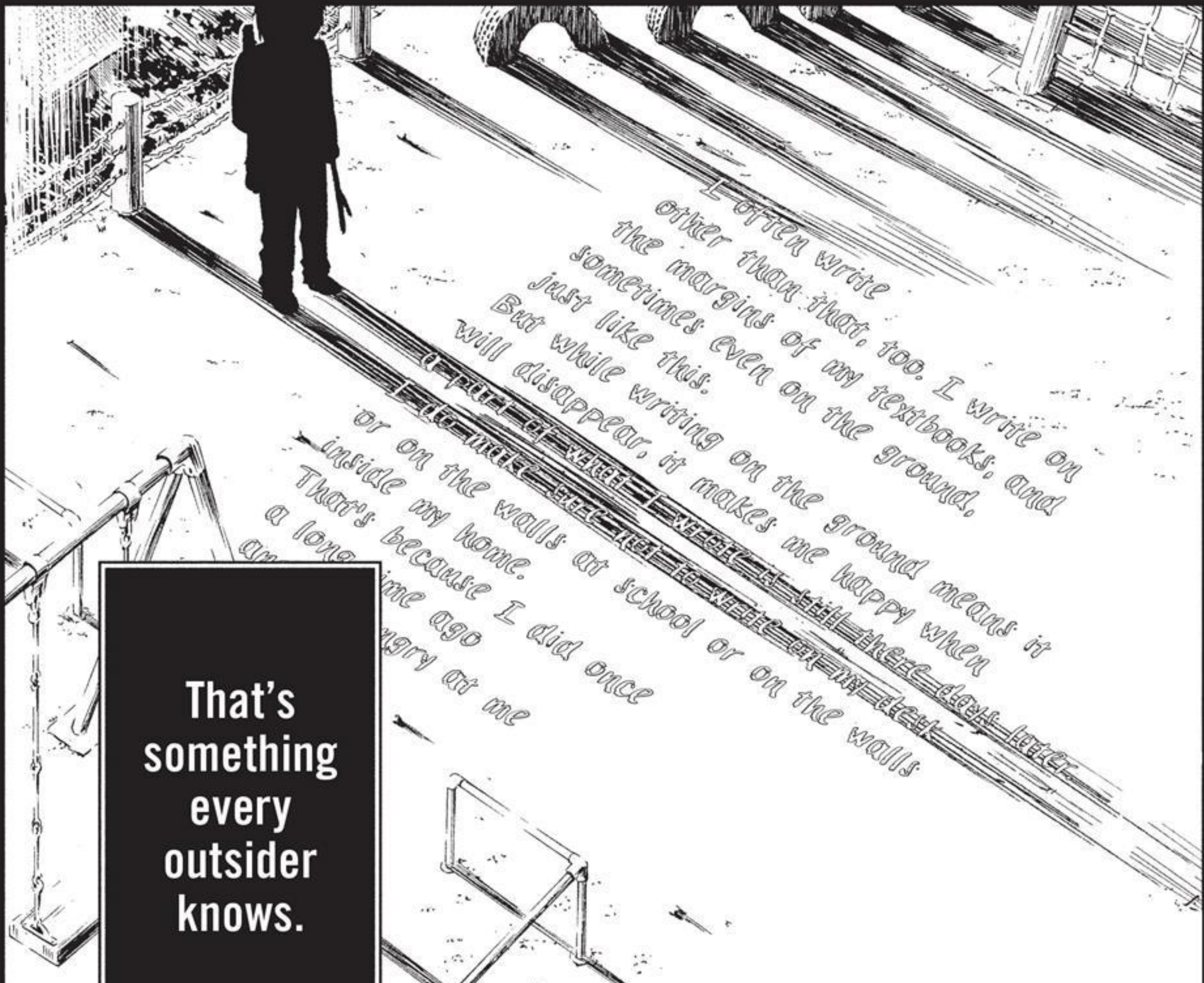


If I ever  
tried to  
blend in,

if I ever did  
something as  
overambitious  
as trying to  
get along with  
everyone...















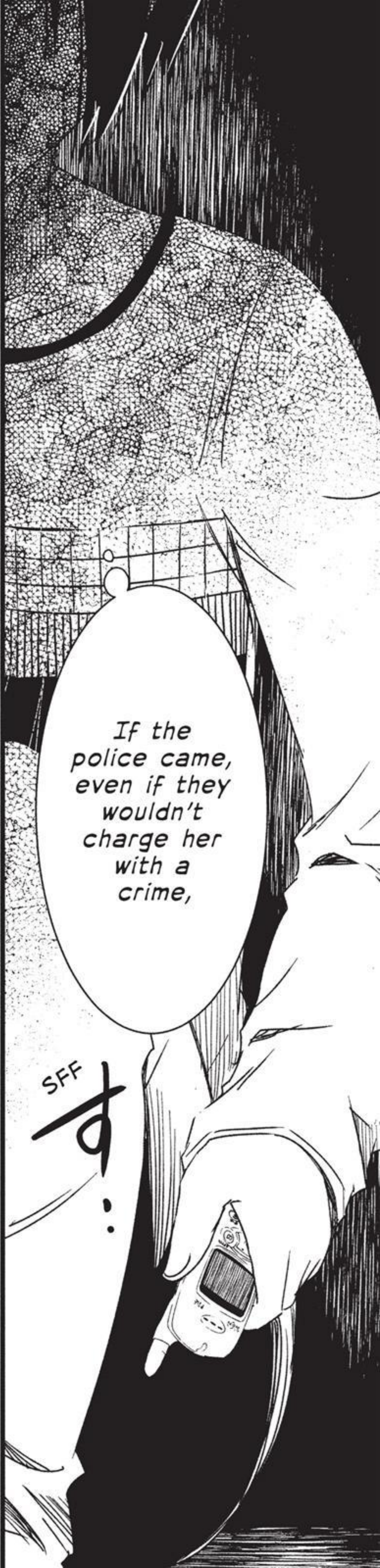
*This  
isn't  
the  
kind of  
thing  
you  
can  
laugh  
away,*

*so  
they'd  
have  
no  
choice  
...*



*I'm  
sure*

*she'll  
receive  
some kind  
of harsh  
punish-  
ment.*



*If the  
police came,  
even if they  
wouldn't  
charge her  
with a  
crime,*

SFF





I knew  
very  
well how  
society  
viewed  
children  
like her.

But would  
that really  
lead to her  
becoming  
reformed?

I couldn't  
help but  
feel worried  
that it would  
only

*But*  
...

I  
knew  
all  
too

well.

further  
warp  
her as a  
person.





was  
aspiring to  
become an  
author back  
then.

Just  
as I

Really,  
the only  
option for  
a kid like  
her was to  
become a  
writer or  
something.

She  
wasn't a  
monster,

but  
there was  
a strong  
possibility  
that it  
would turn  
her into  
one...





twitch

Of  
course  
...



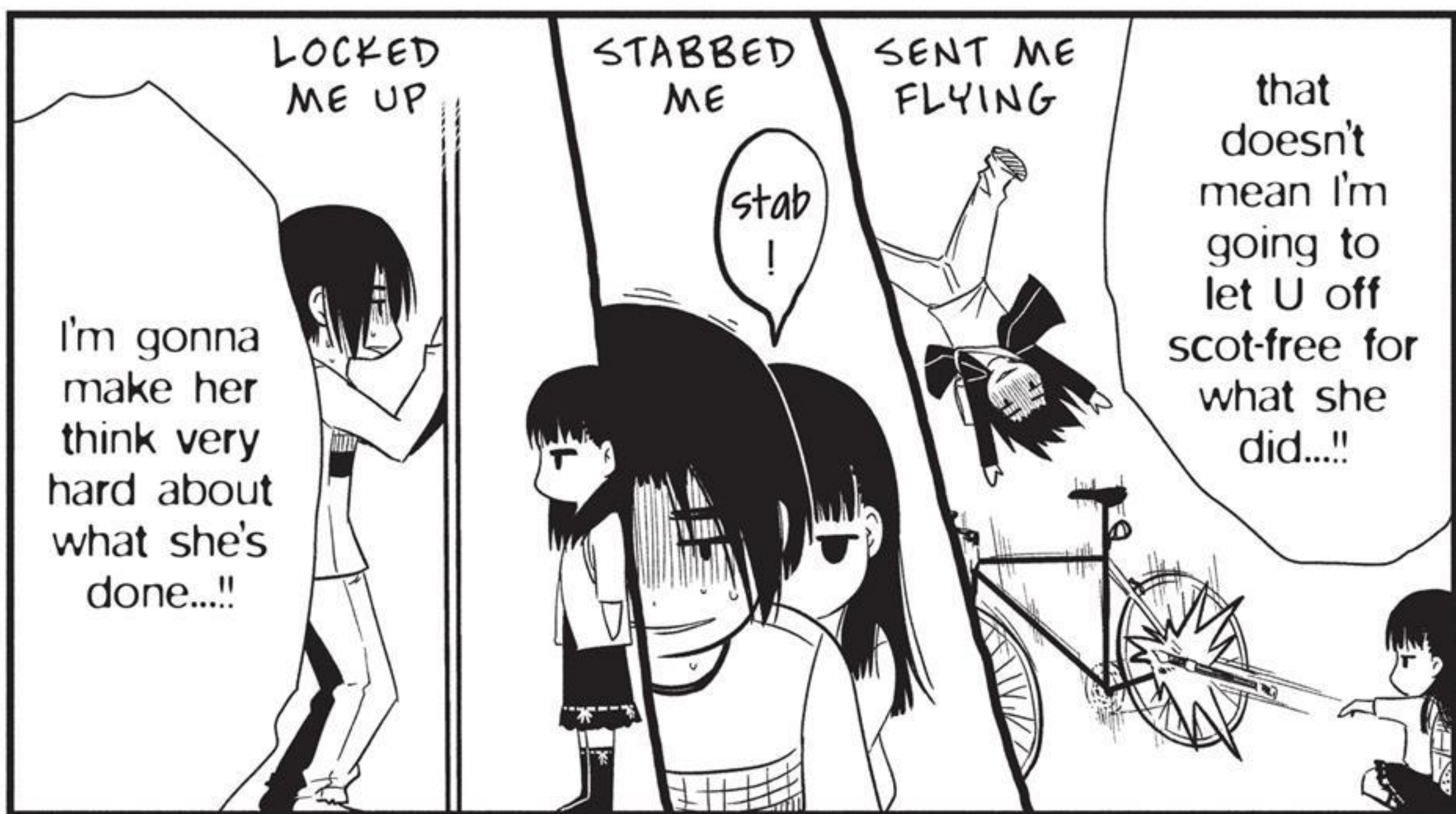
if I just  
resign  
myself to  
suffering  
through  
it,

won't  
this  
all end  
peacefully  
...?



If  
that's  
the  
case  
...

if  
I just  
endure  
it,



LOCKED  
ME UP

I'm gonna  
make her  
think very  
hard about  
what she's  
done....!!

STABBED  
ME

stab  
!

SENT ME  
FLYING

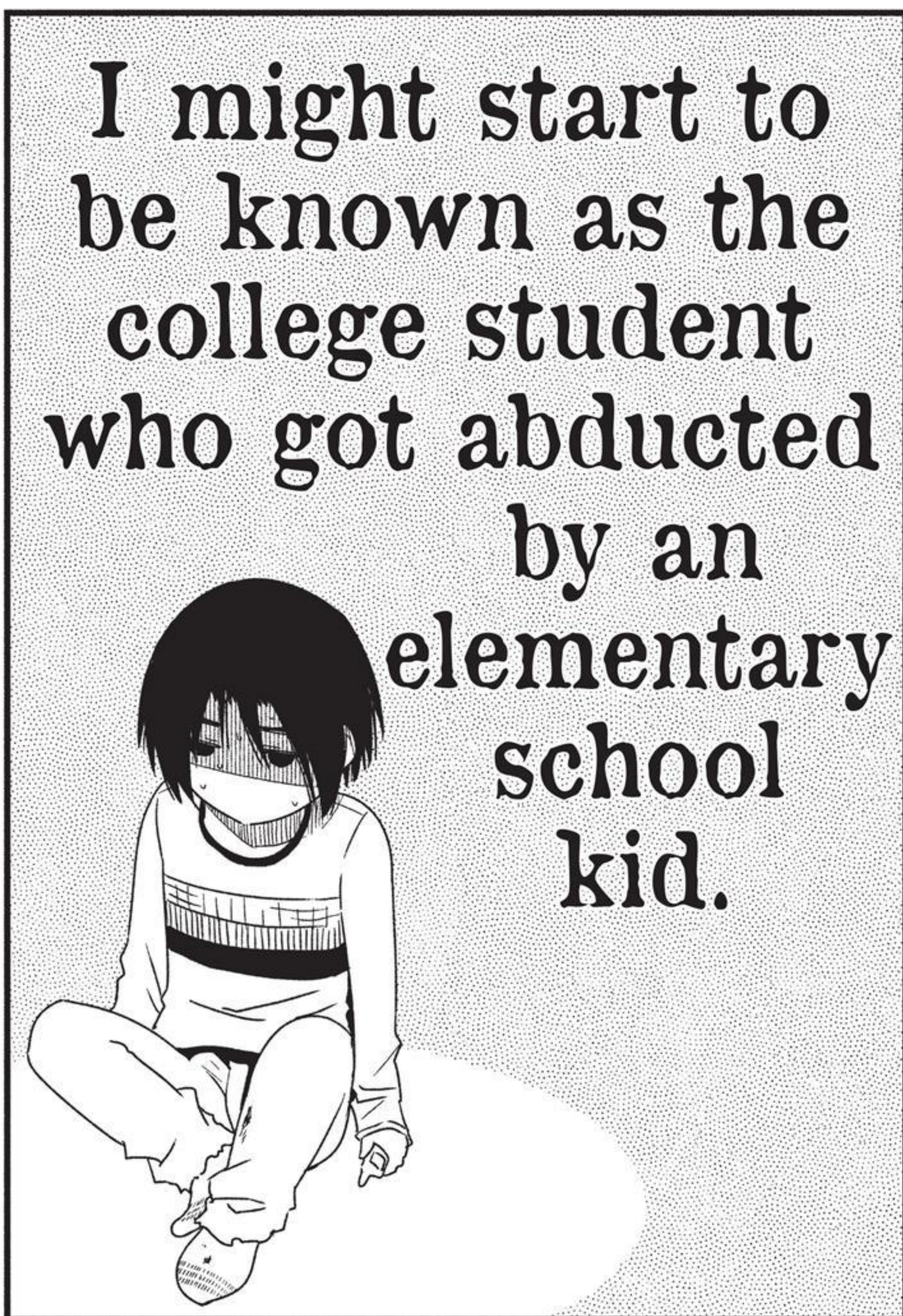
that  
doesn't  
mean I'm  
going to  
let U off  
scot-free for  
what she  
did....!!



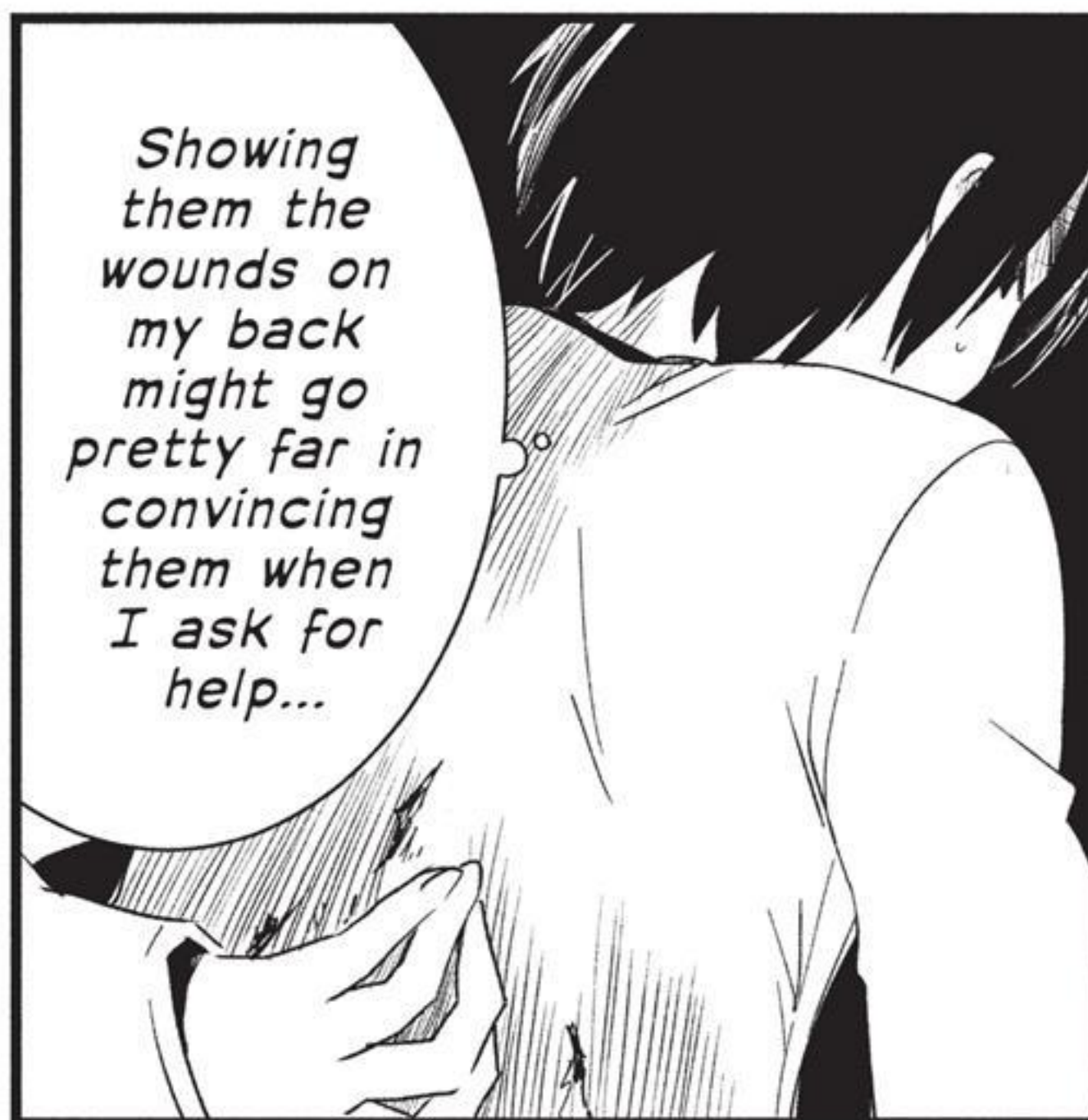
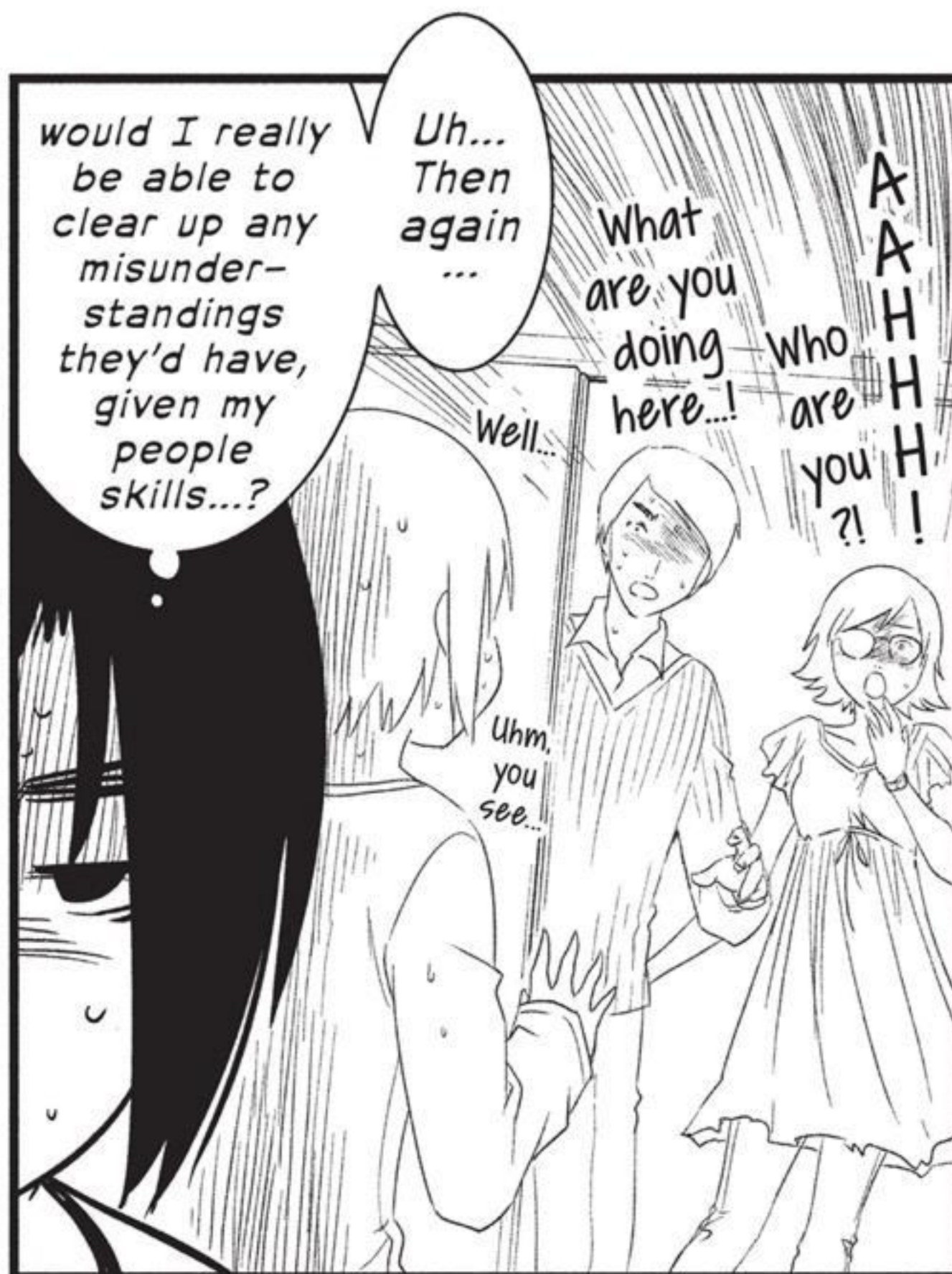
by telling  
her parents  
what she did  
and having  
them scold  
her...

But that  
kind of  
punishment  
might be  
best carried  
out

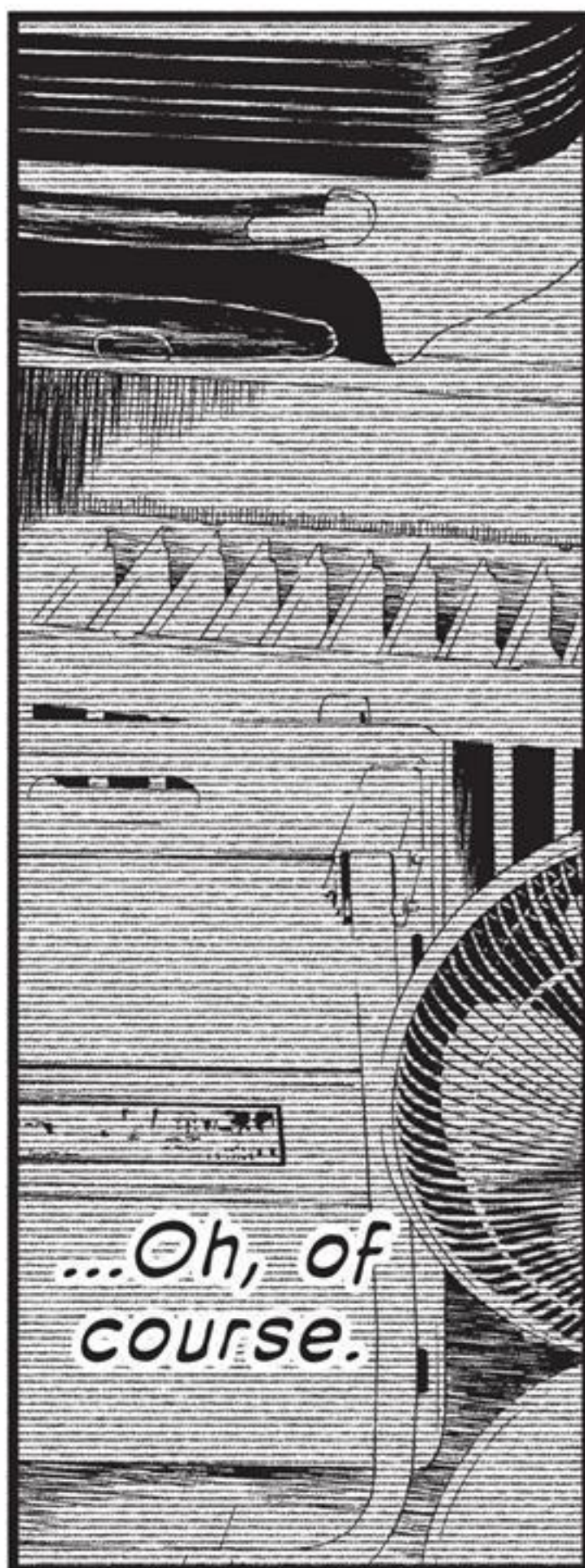










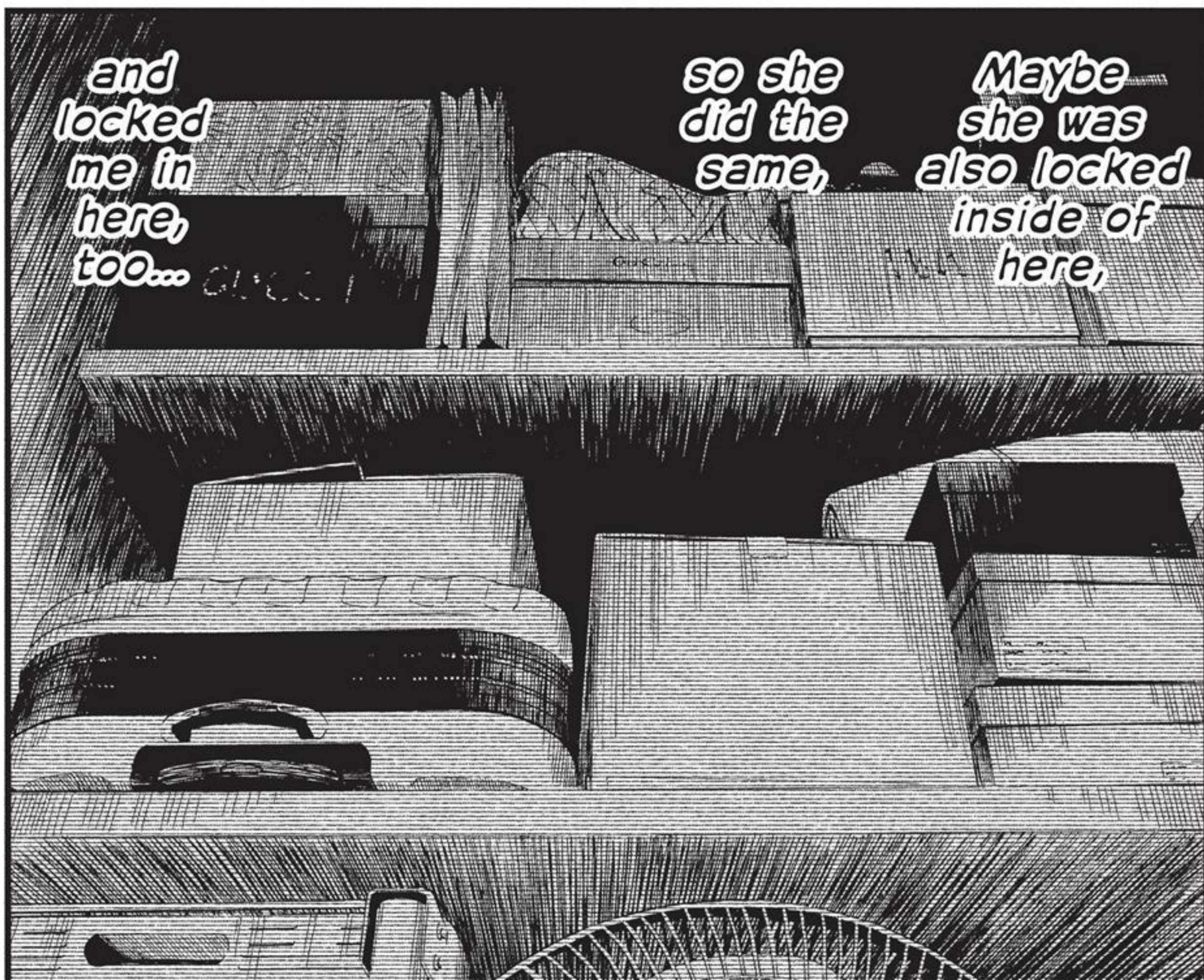


...Oh, of course.



why did she lock me inside the closet that's closest to the entrance?

This is the easiest place to ask her parents for help once they get back...



and locked me in here, too...

so she did the same,

Maybe she was also locked inside of here,





If I'm  
dealing with  
the kind  
of parents  
who aren't  
afraid to  
scold their  
daughter,  
there  
might  
be  
hope.

Locking  
a child  
inside a  
closet  
is a  
classic  
method  
of  
punishment.



and kept  
me from  
realizing  
what I  
could've  
figured  
out

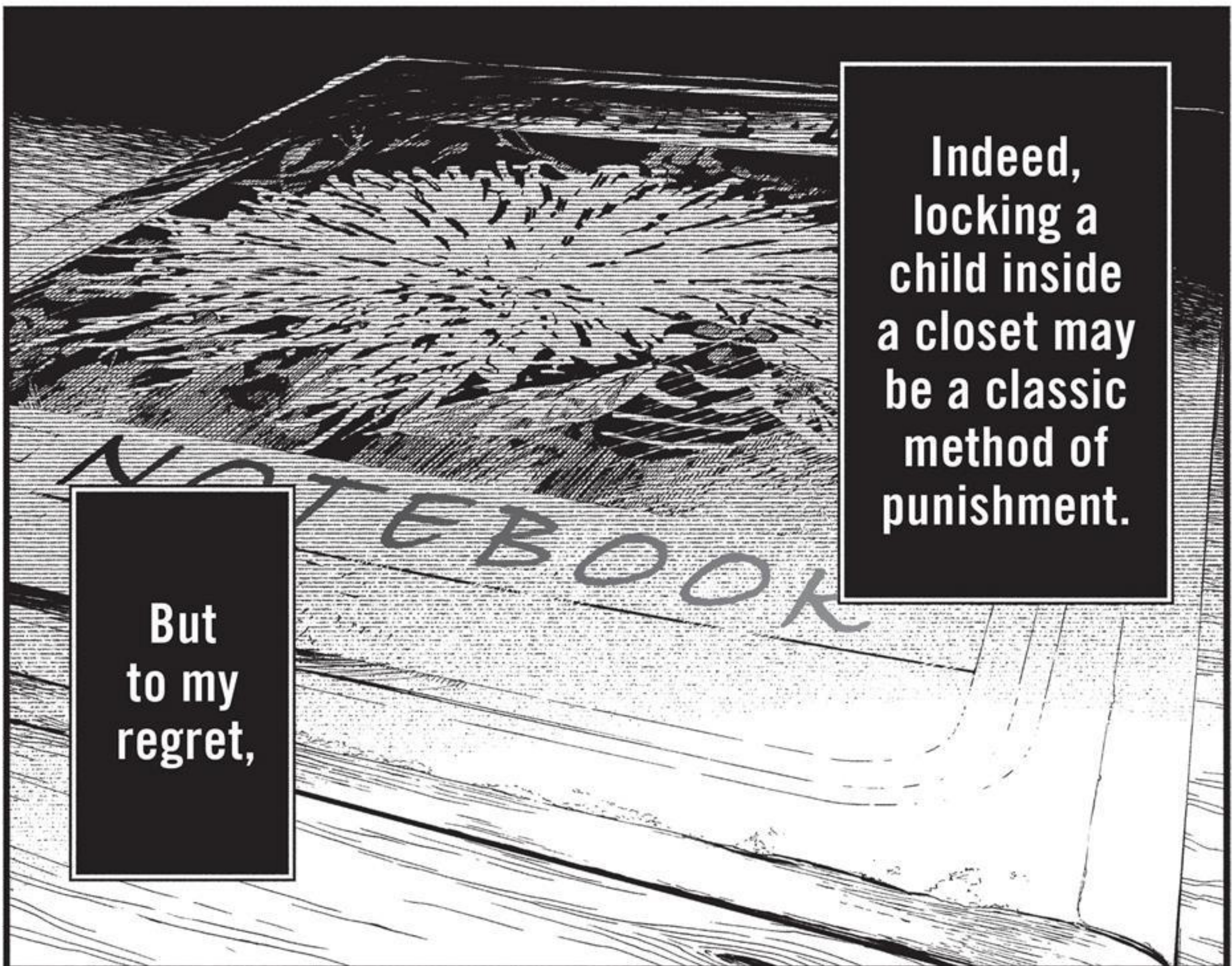
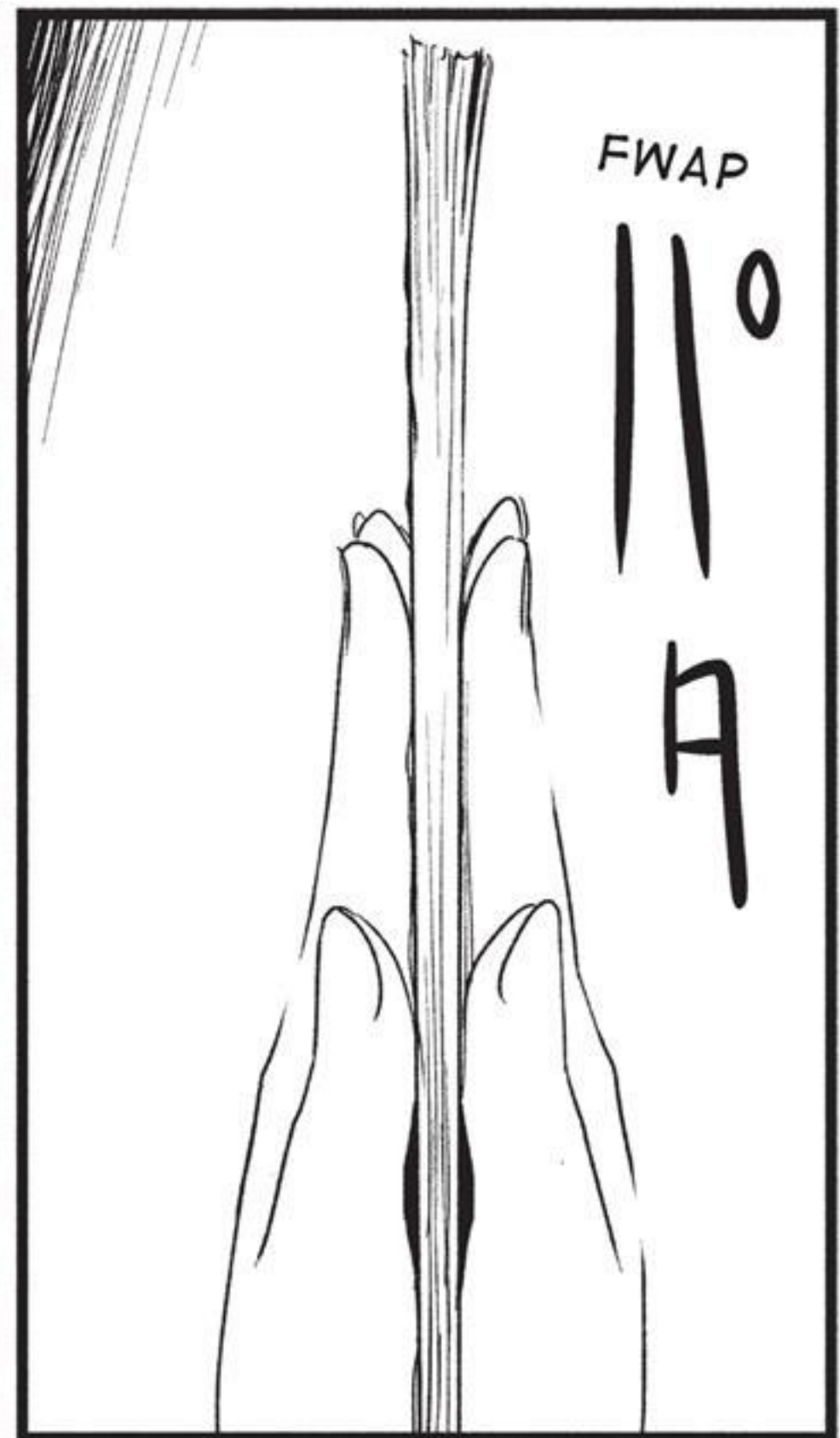
That  
slight  
hope  
placated  
me,

if I had  
followed  
that train  
of thought  
just a bit  
further.



If  
I just  
politely  
explain  
everything  
that  
happened,  
they  
should  
understand.





But  
to my  
regret,

Indeed,  
locking a  
child inside  
a closet may  
be a classic  
method of  
punishment.





**I wasn't  
able to  
figure out  
just then**

**that it's  
also a  
classic  
method of  
abuse.**

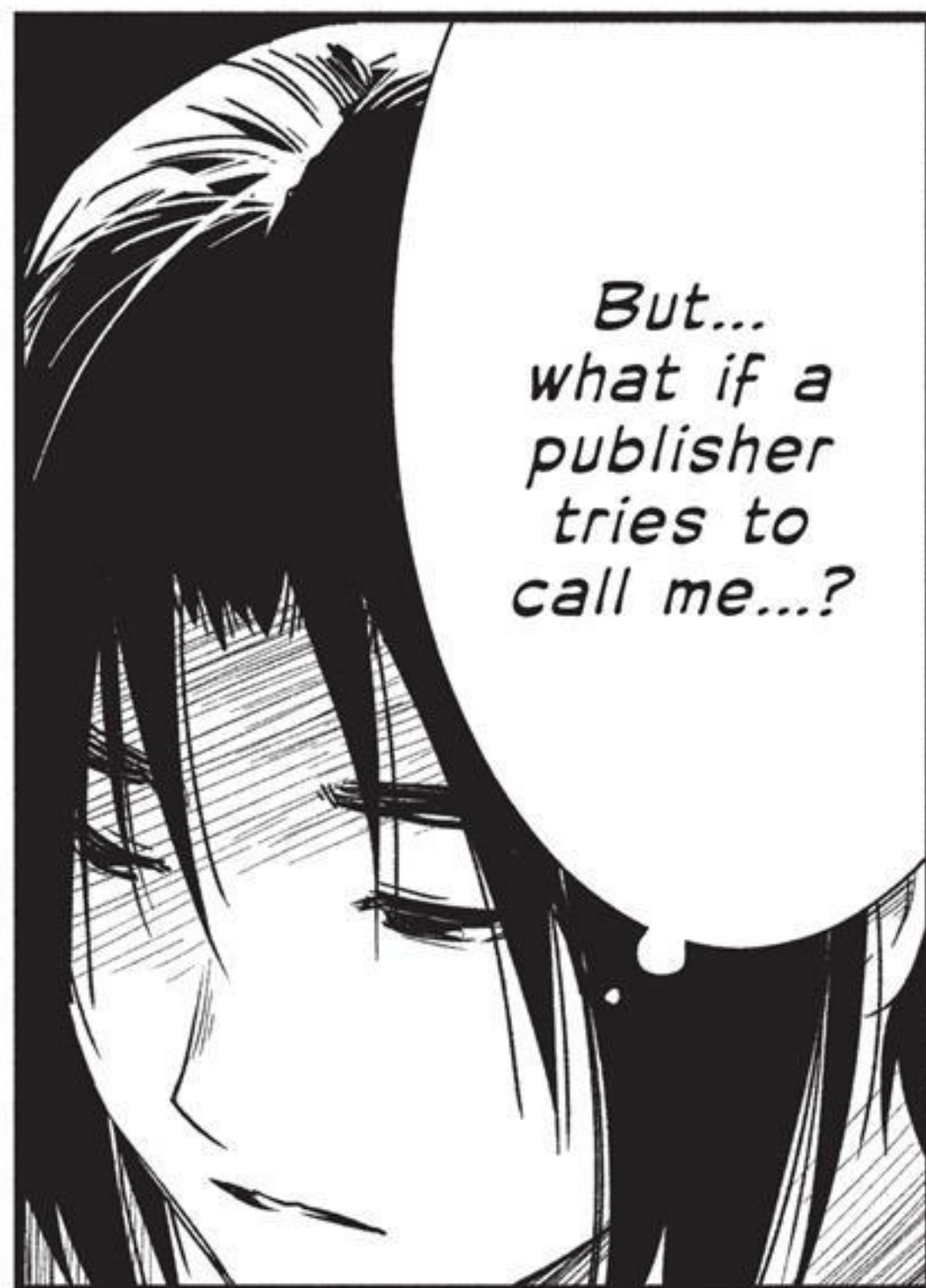










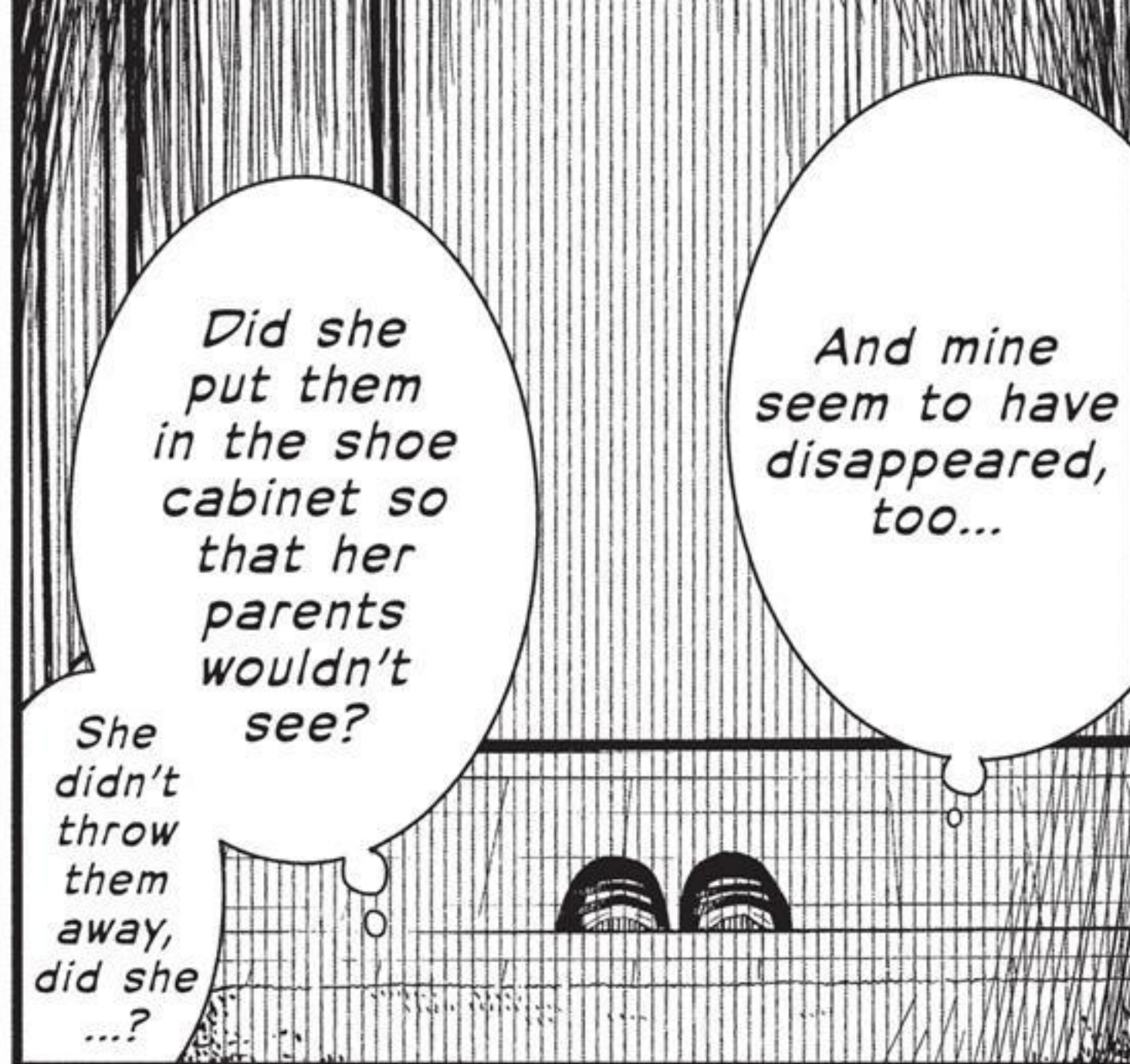


かた..  
KLATTER

THP THP THP...  
ゝ, ゝ, ゝ



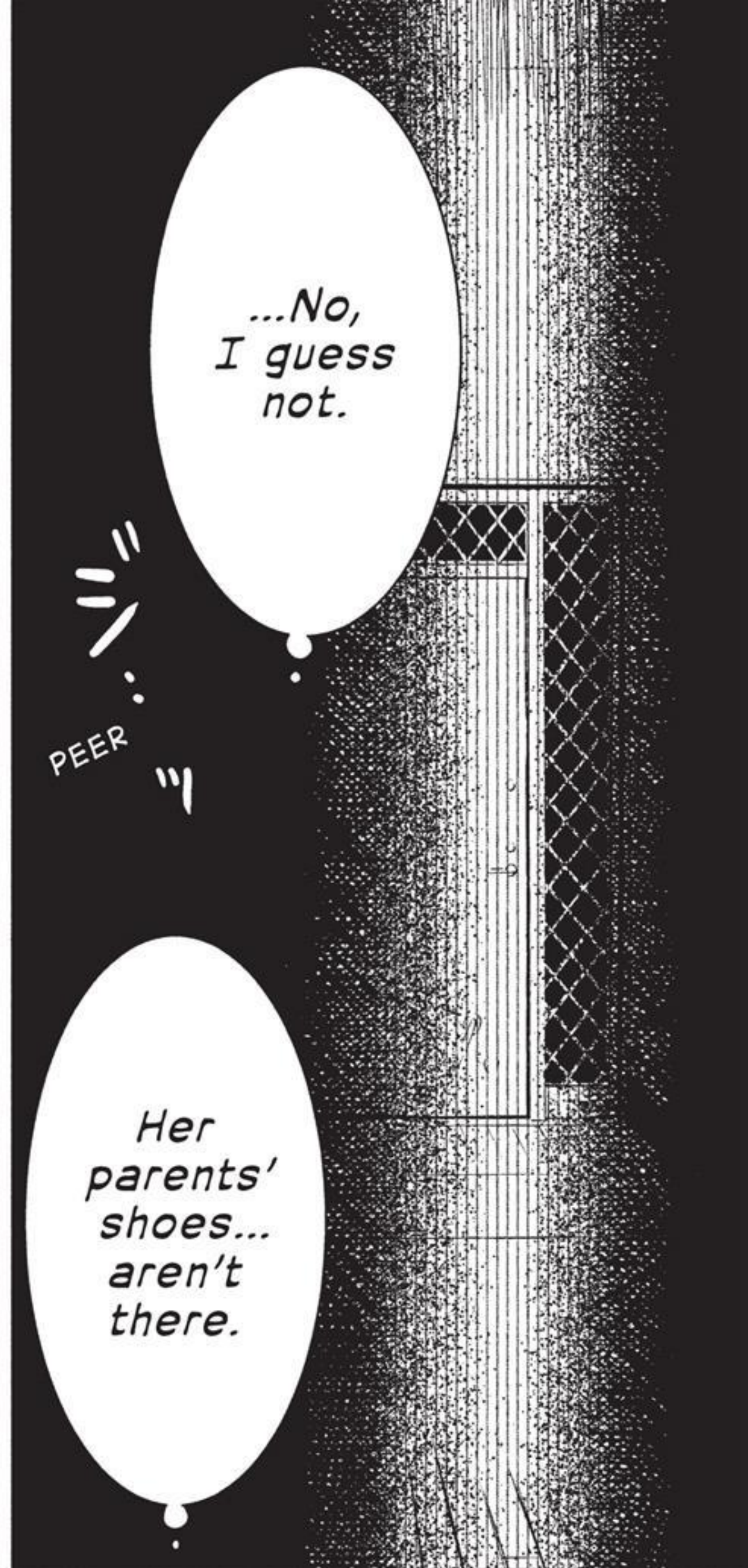




She didn't throw them away, did she...?

Did she put them in the shoe cabinet so that her parents wouldn't see?

And mine seem to have disappeared, too...



PEER

...No, I guess not.

Her parents' shoes... aren't there.



I must've only been asleep for a few minut—

klik

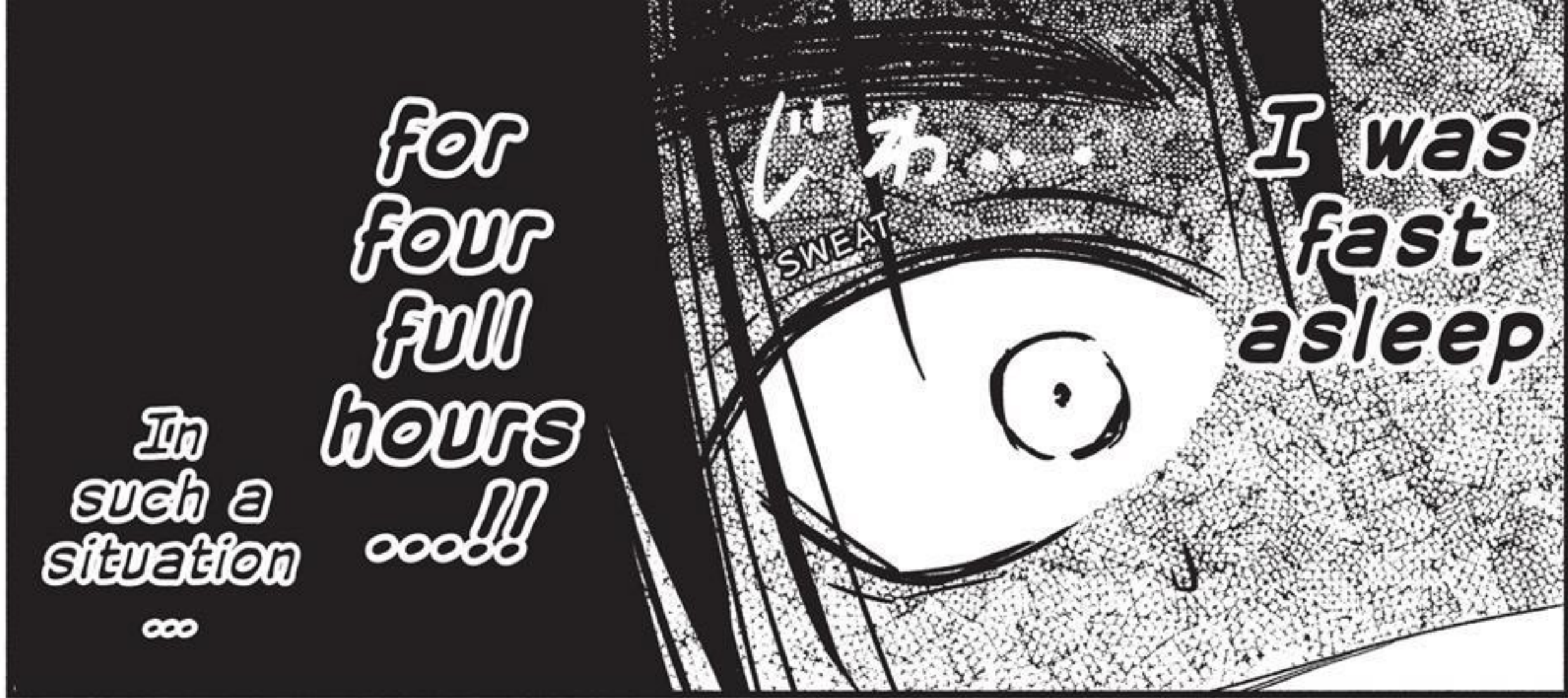
WHEW

Either way, it's fine.

I didn't miss my chance to do something as soon as her parents got back...



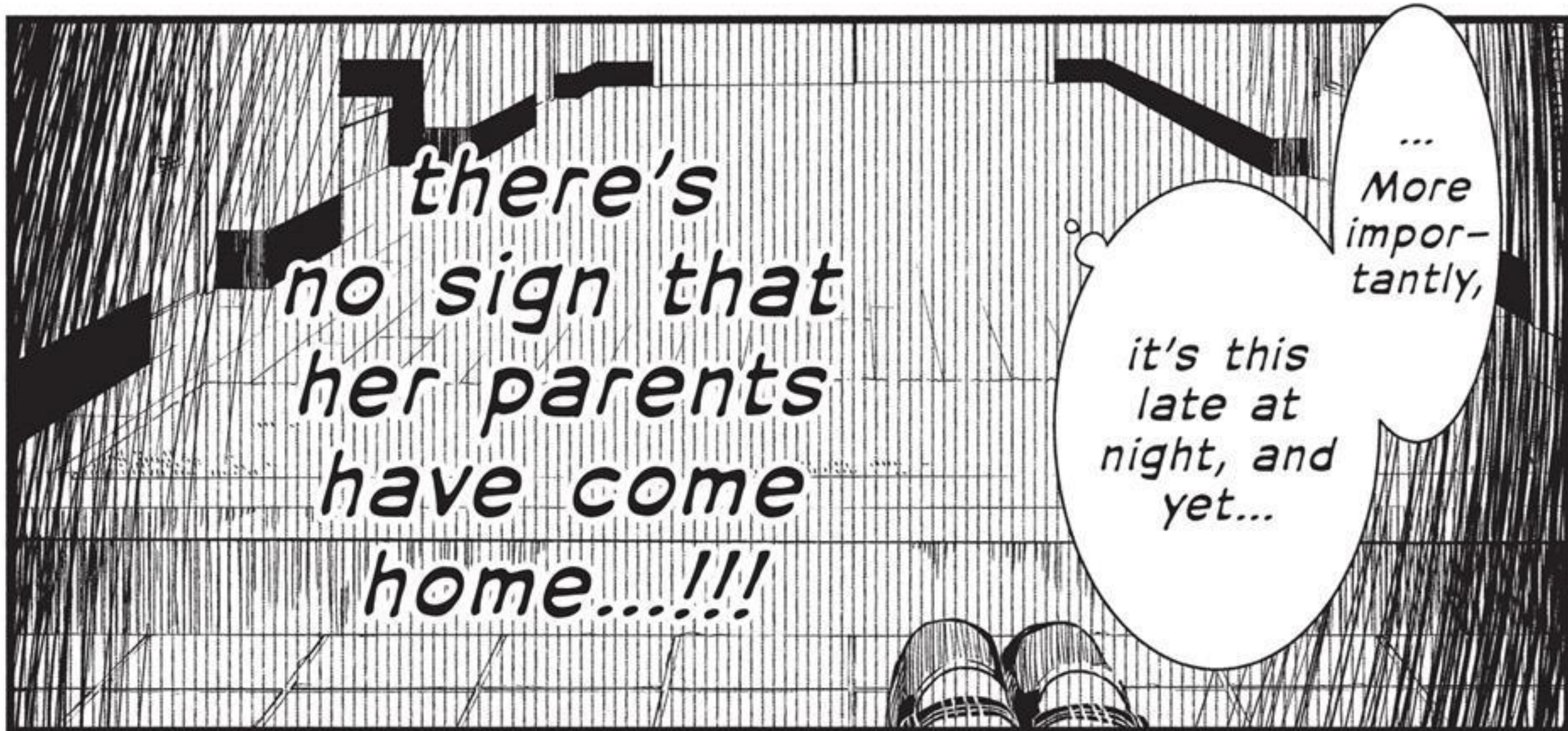




for  
four  
full  
hours  
In  
such a  
situation  
ooo

じあ...  
SWEAT

I was  
fast  
asleep



there's  
no sign that  
her parents  
have come  
home...!!!

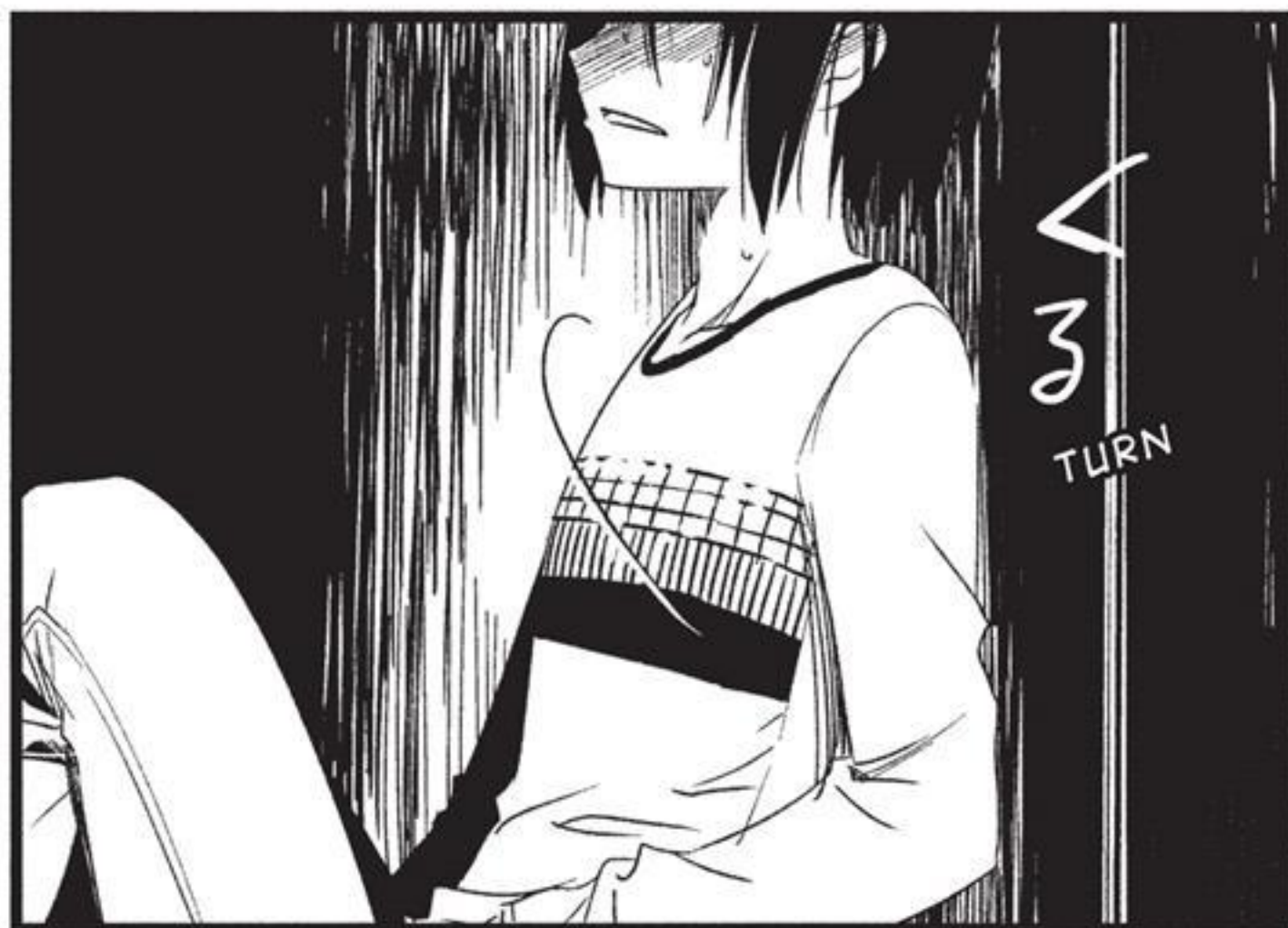
More  
importantly,  
it's this  
late at  
night, and  
yet...



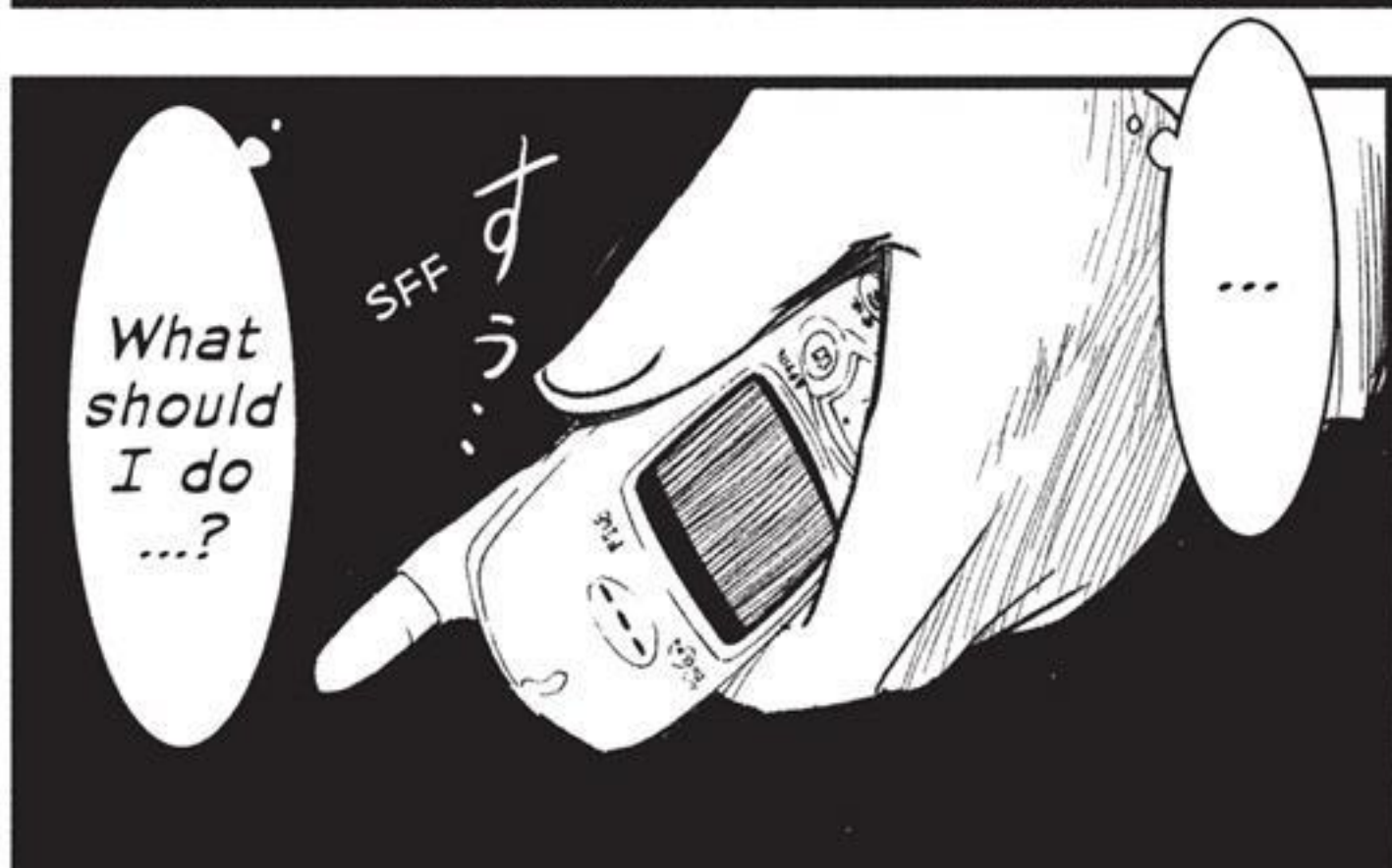
すう...  
SK...

One  
night  
...

はあ...  
HAAH...



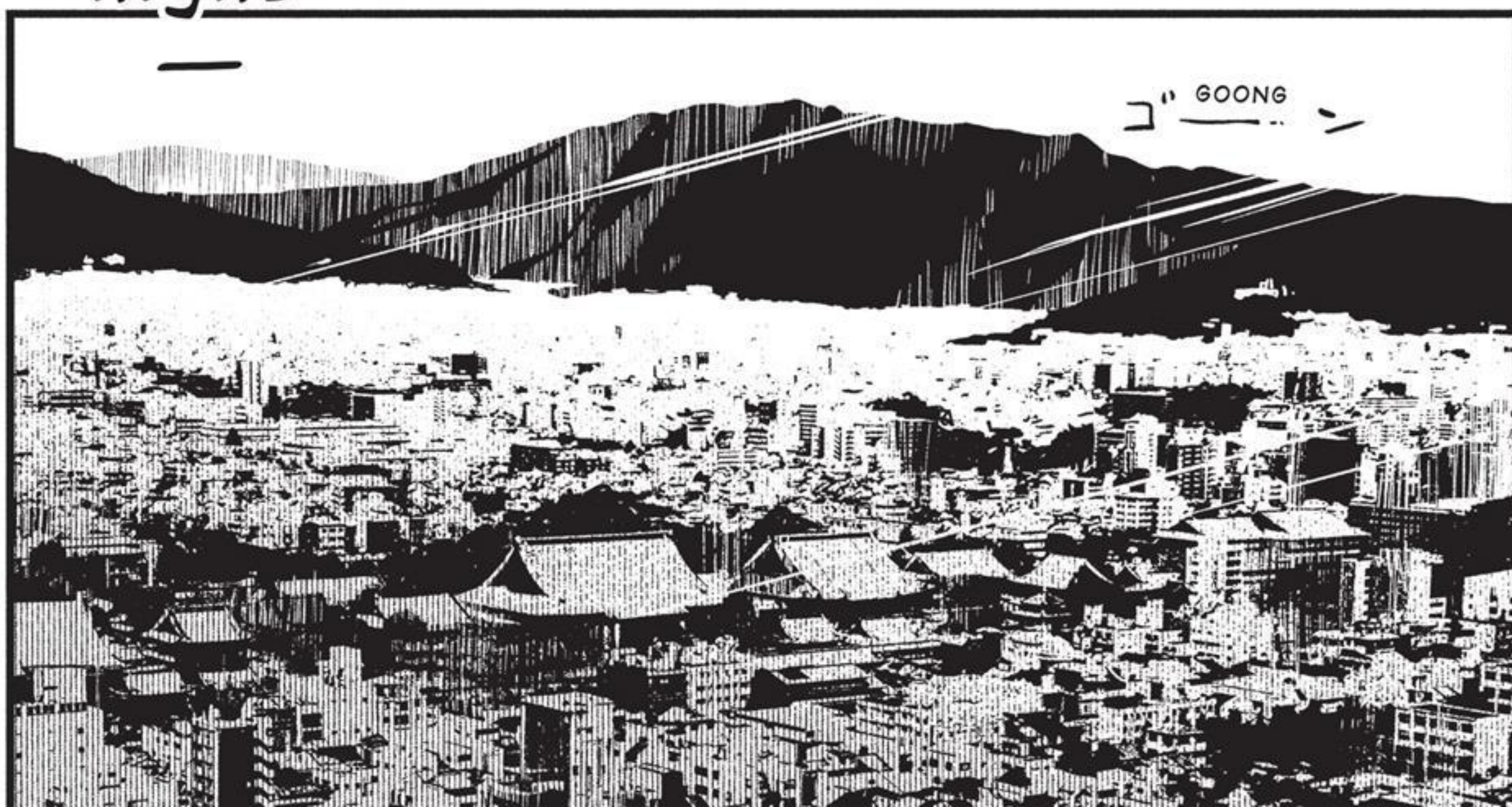
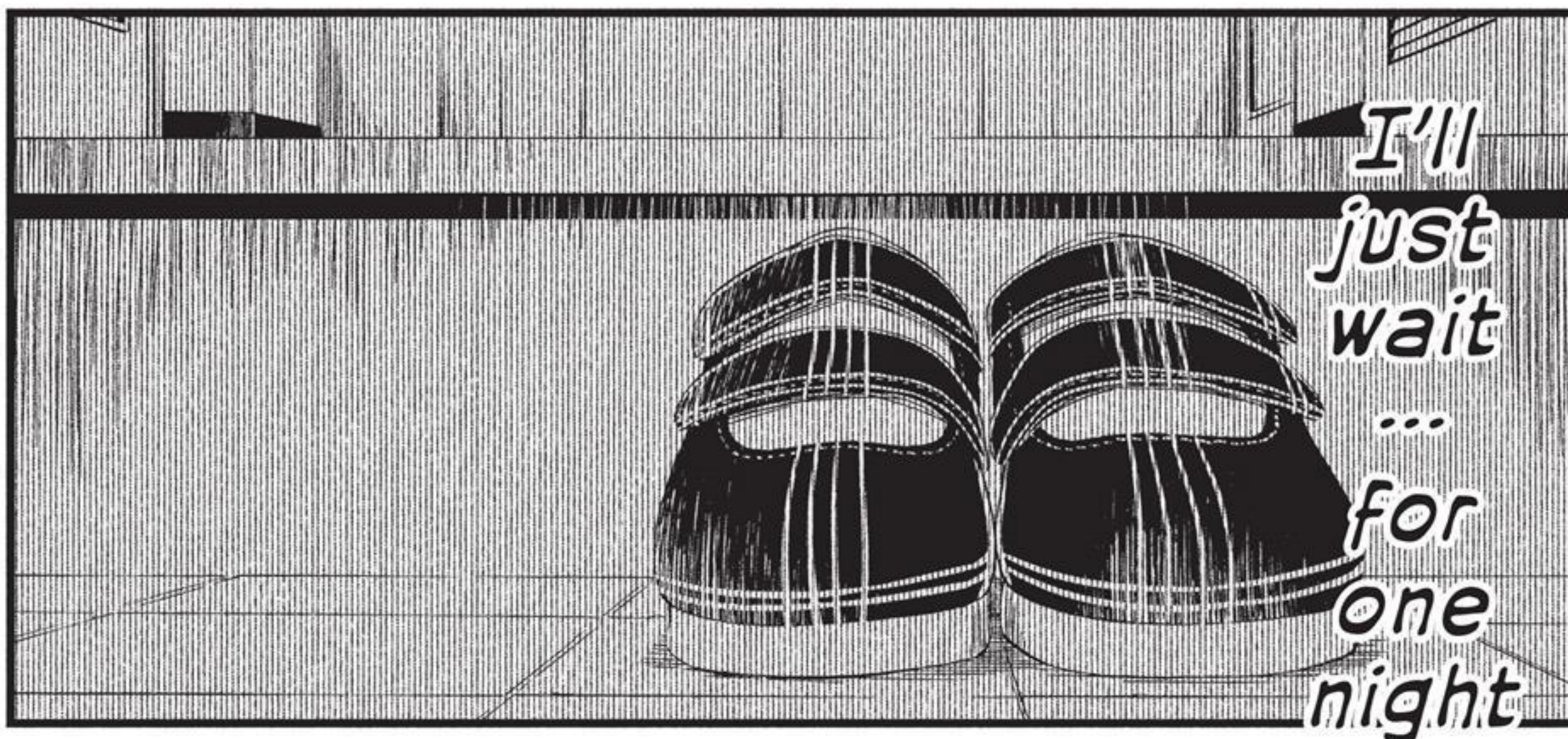
TURN



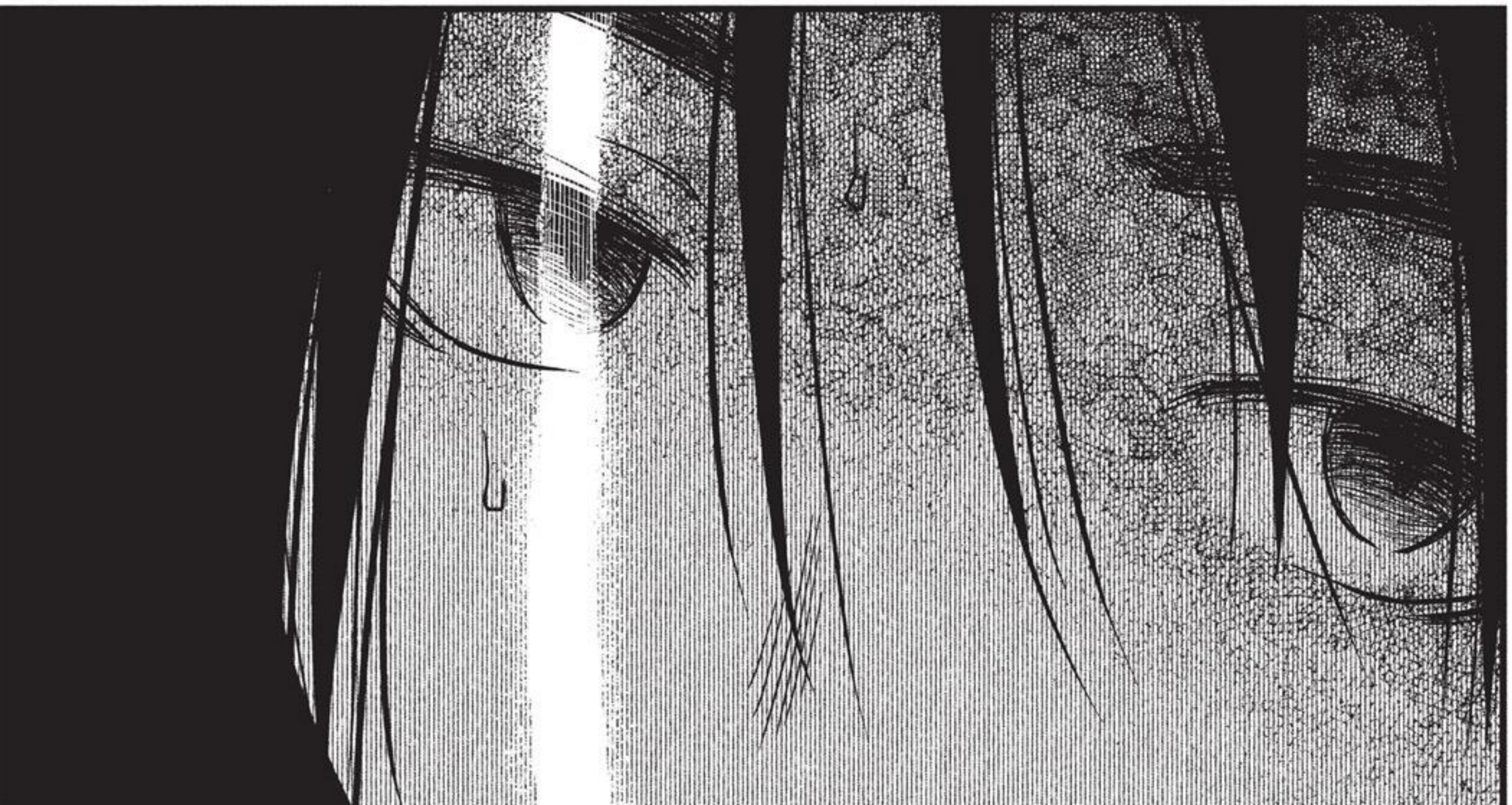
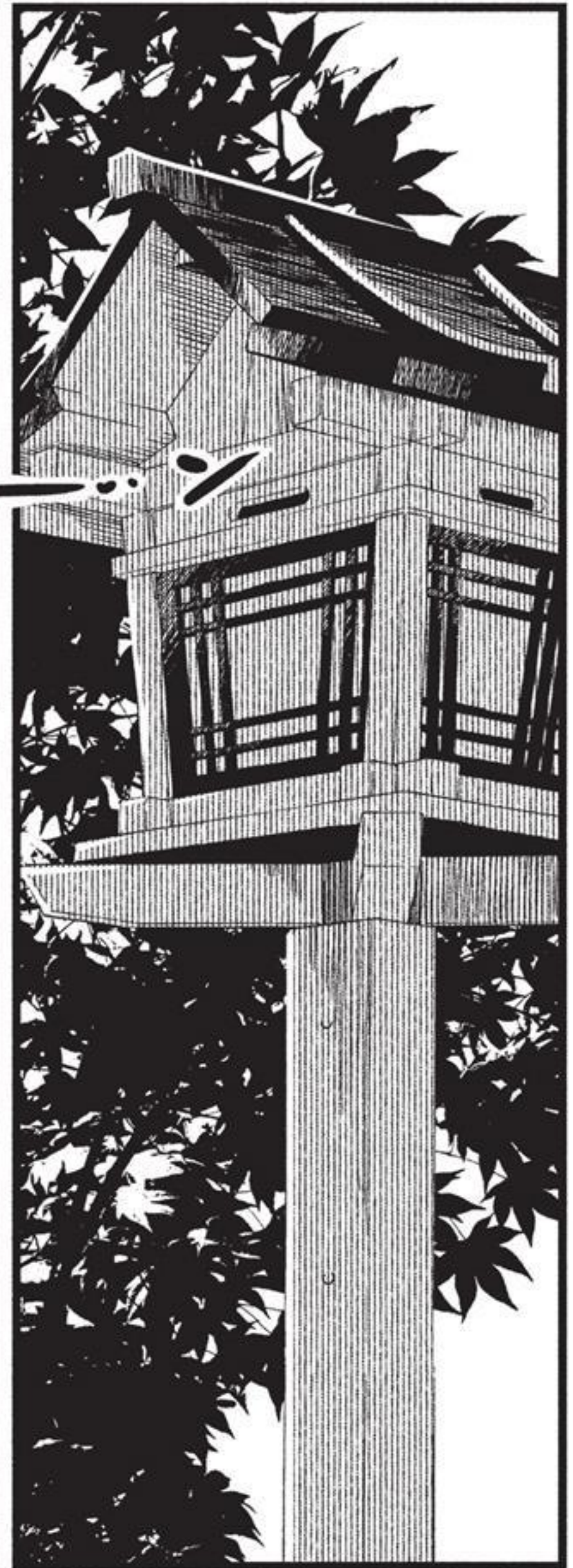
What  
should  
I do  
...?

すう...  
SFF

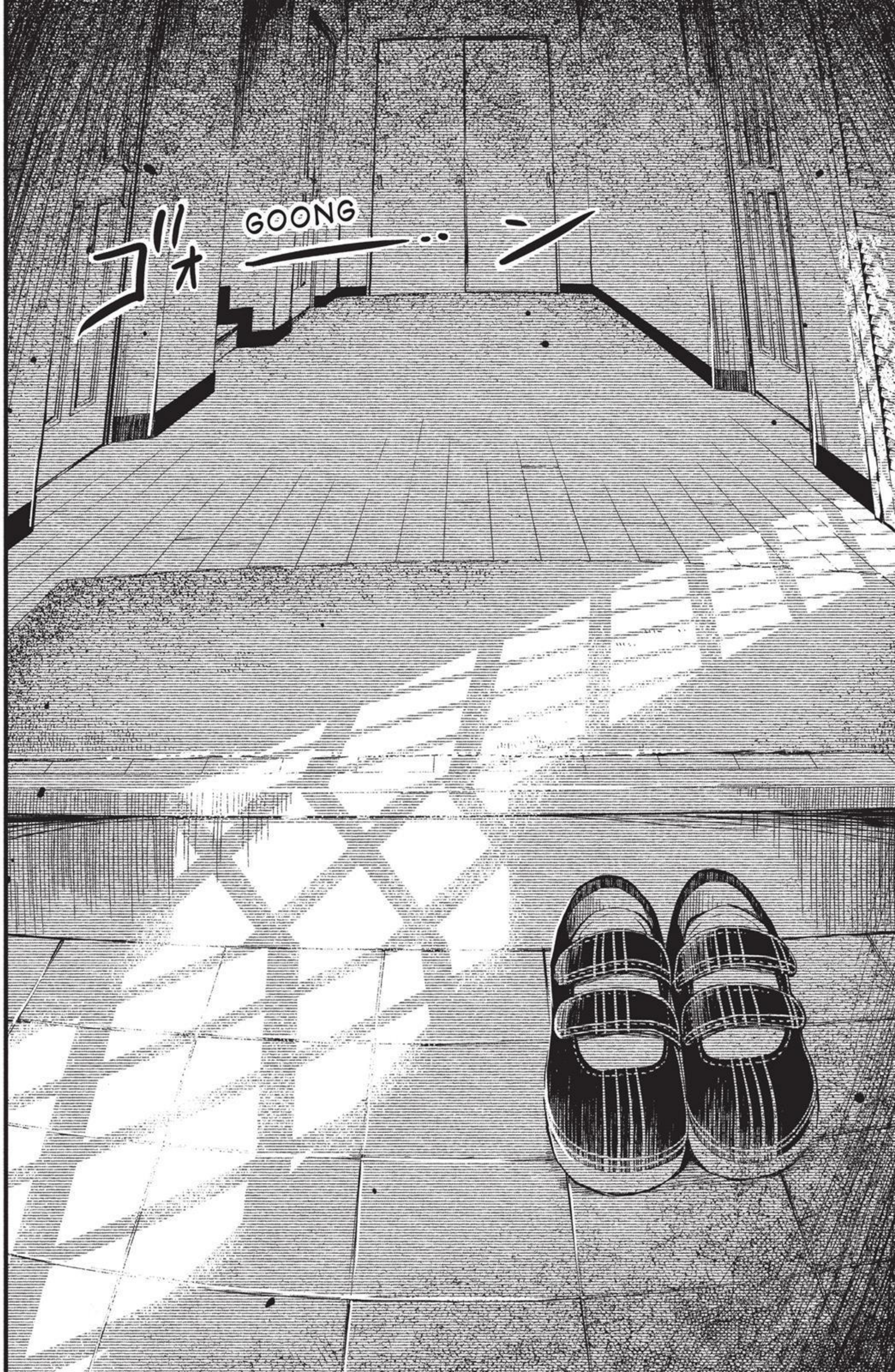












クッ★

GOONG

...



*Could  
this  
girl  
be  
living  
in  
this  
house  
all  
by  
herself  
?*



I, as  
someone  
with a mind  
eccentric  
enough to  
want to  
become a  
writer,

used  
all of the  
powers of  
imagination  
at my  
disposal

and  
arrived  
at an  
improbable  
idea.







was  
just too  
shocking  
for me to  
process.

The fact  
that her  
parents  
weren't  
around

Completely  
unfounded,  
to boot.

It was a  
bizarre  
thought.

no  
mat-  
ter  
what,

If anything,  
there was  
evidence  
against it  
everywhere.

But  
...

I couldn't  
stop my  
overactive  
imagination.

















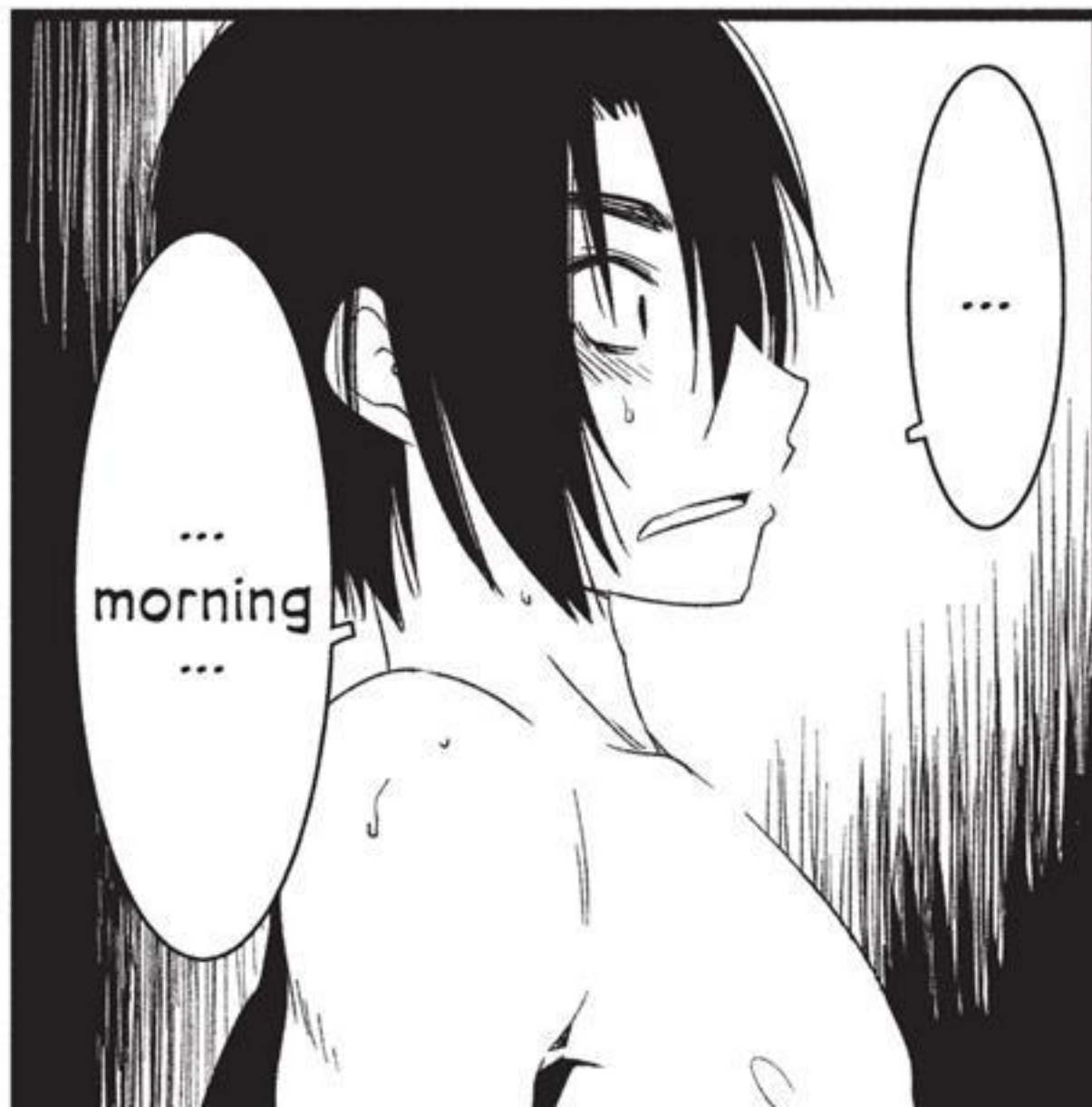
*Good morning.*



Good  
...

Uh...

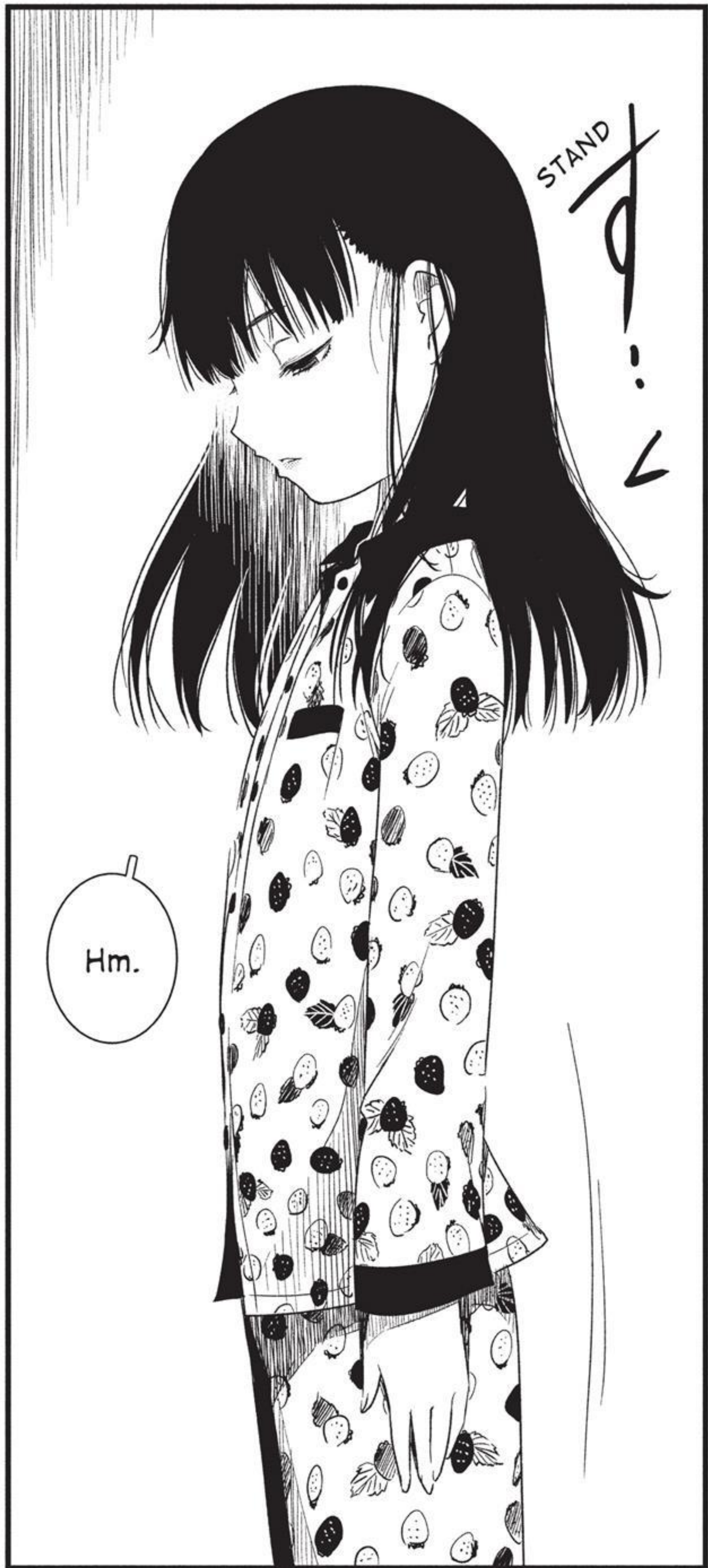
Ah  
...!



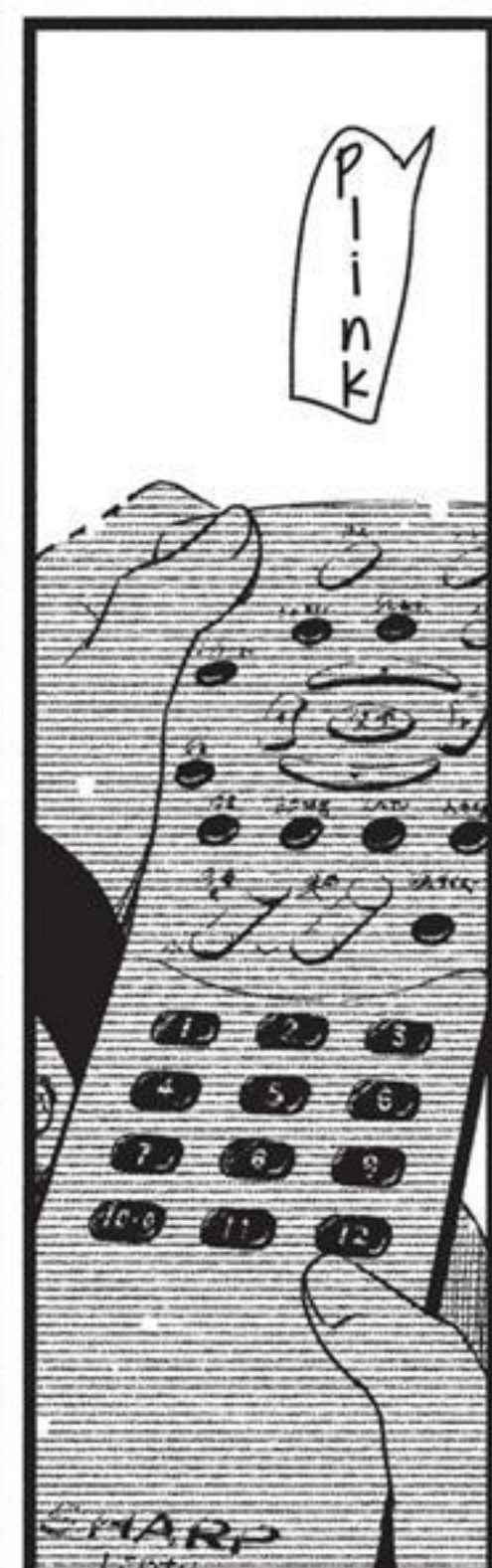
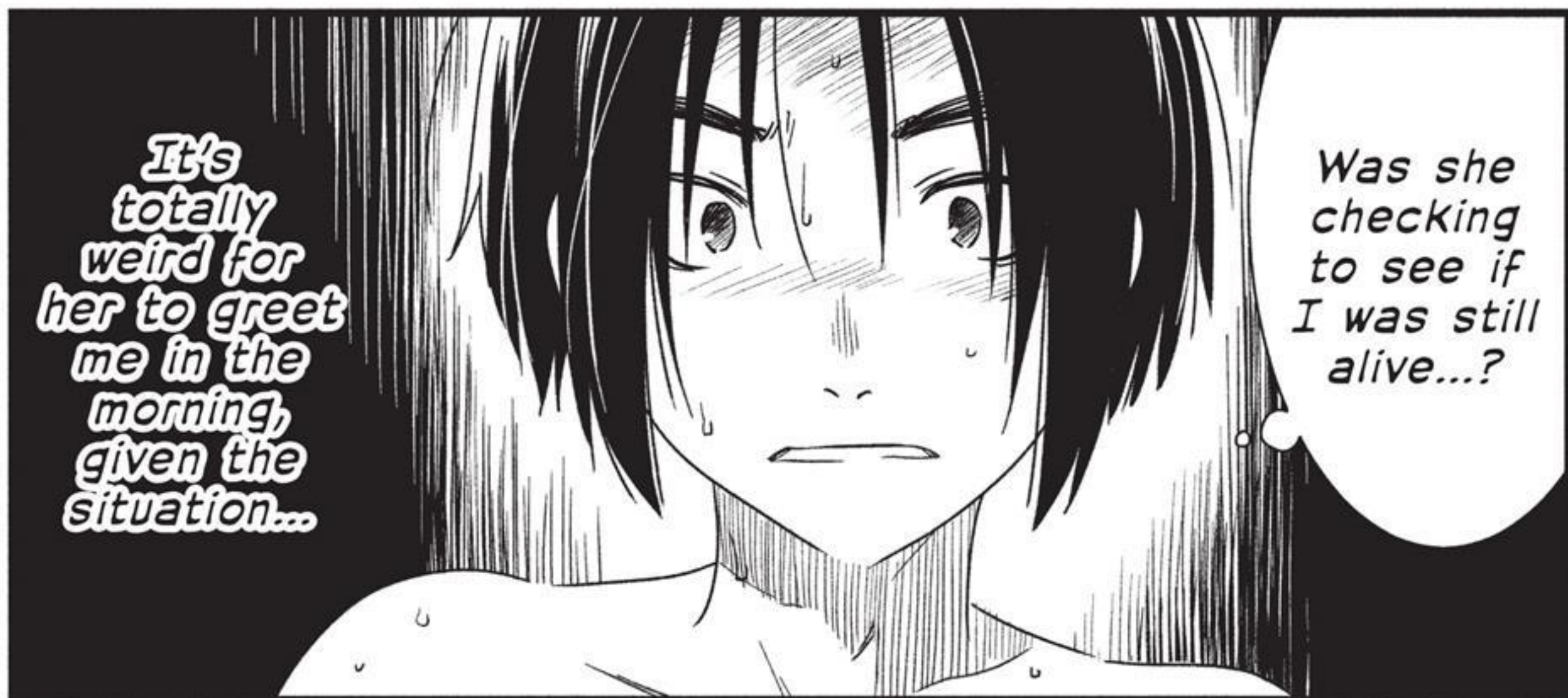
...  
morning  
...







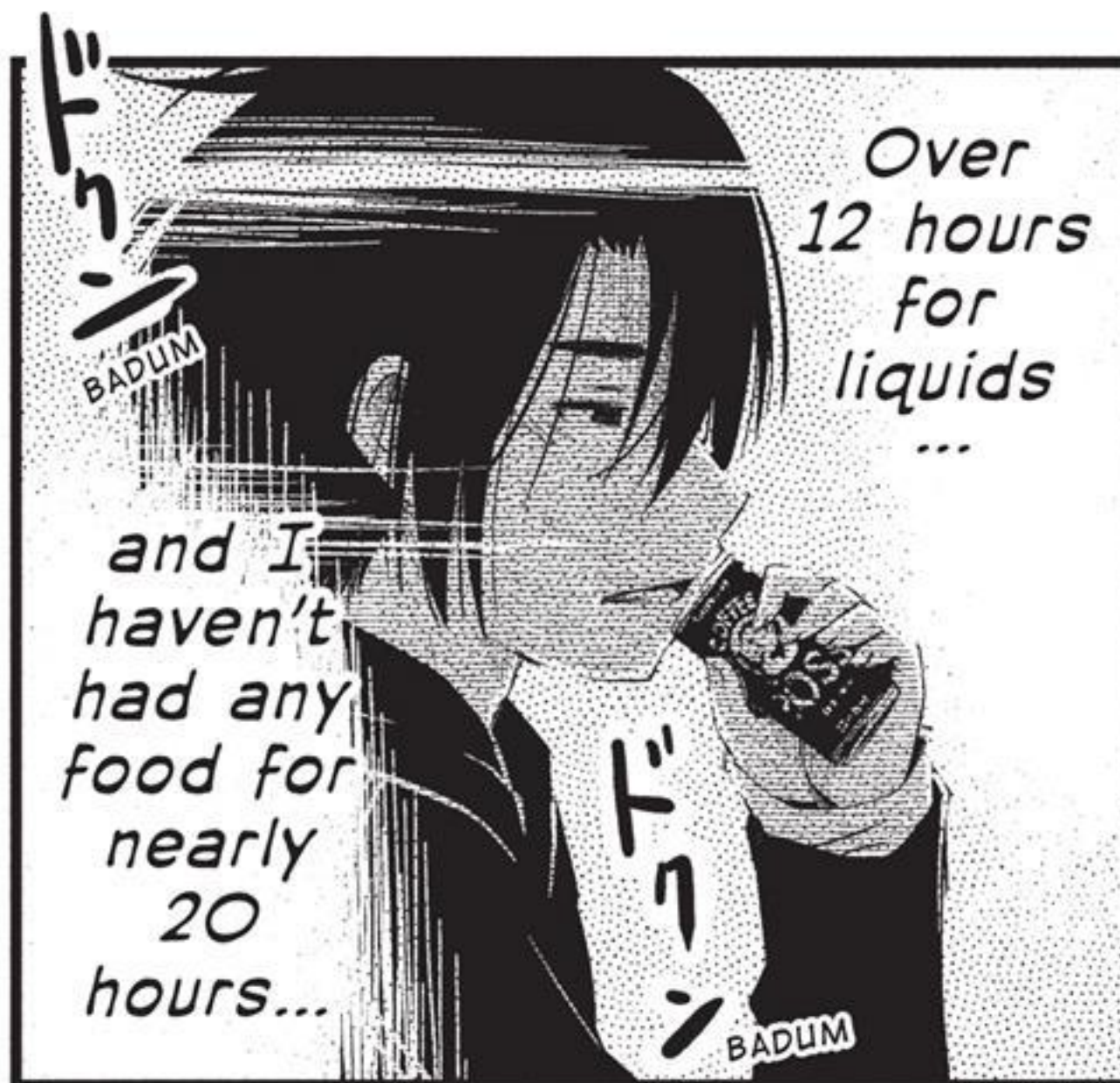












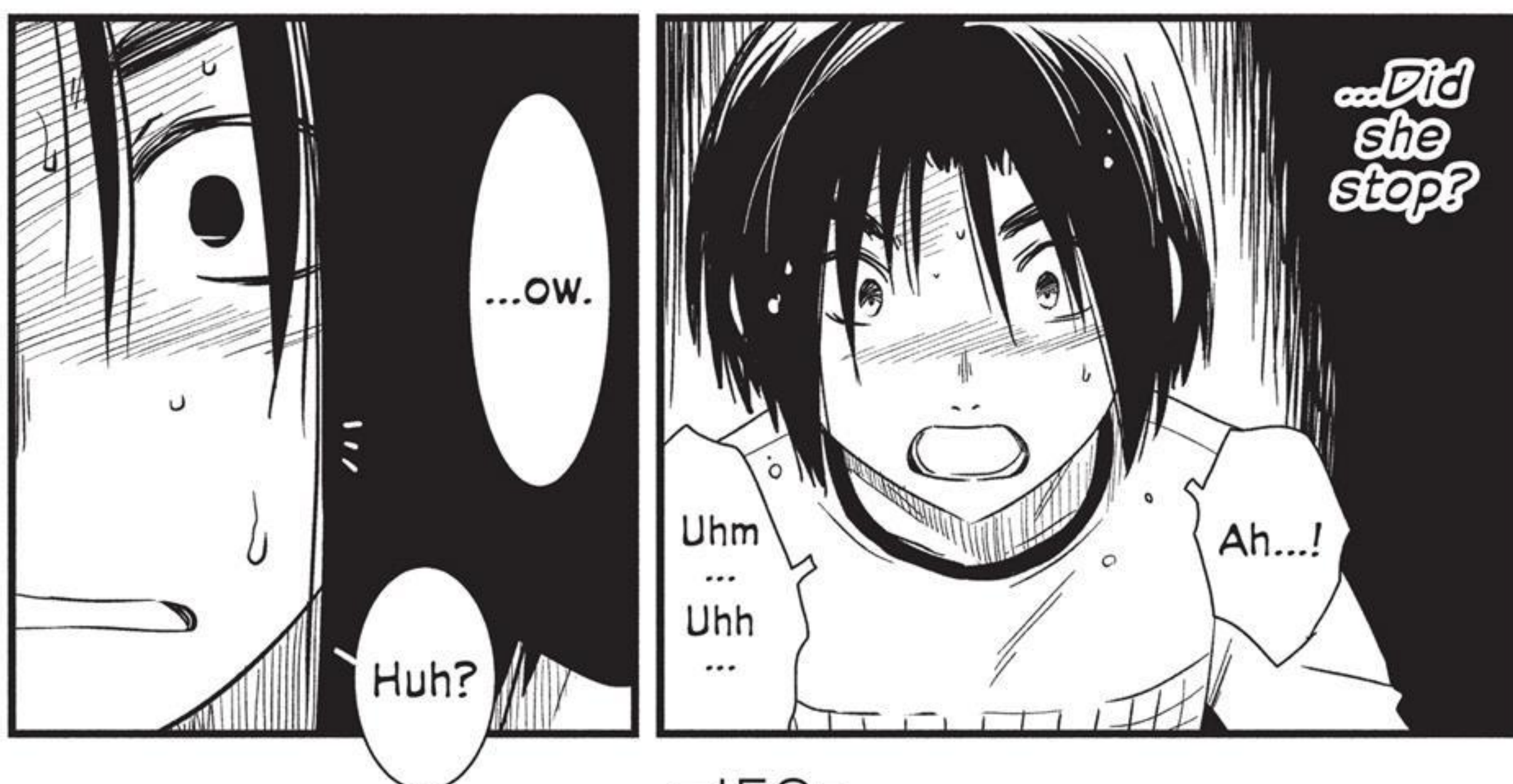
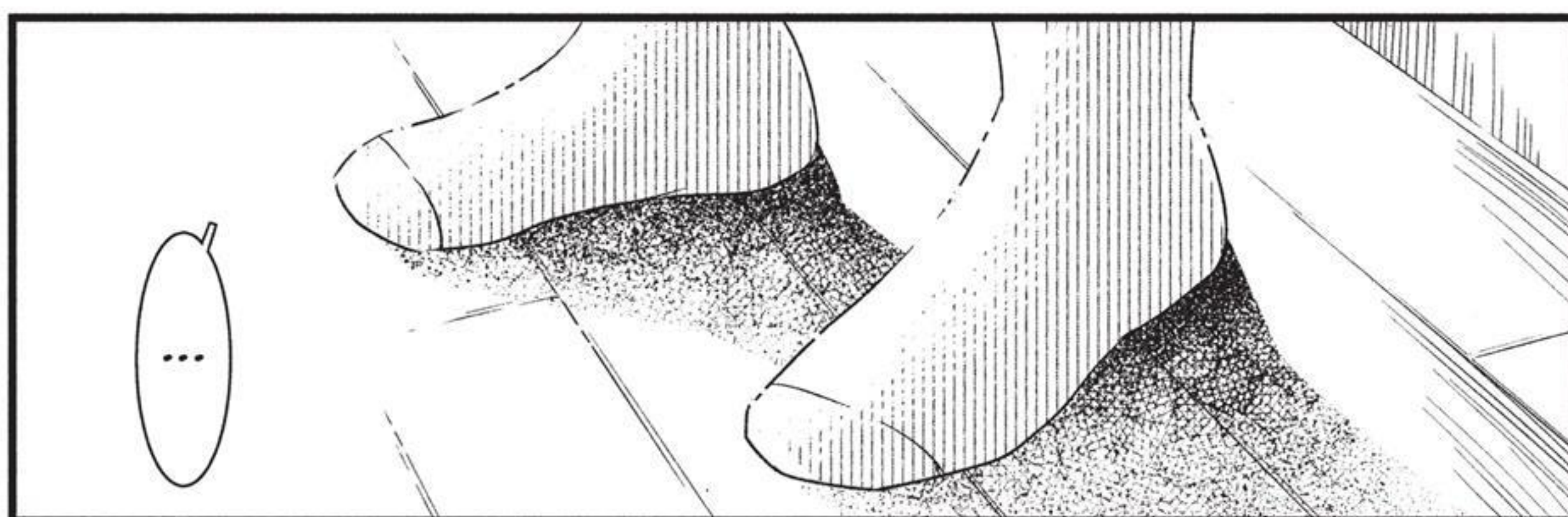




They say you sweat several cups of water just sleeping at night...

Couldn't it be easier to become dehydrated than you might think...?











2014.11







*I'll  
be*

*going  
now.*





Wh...

Huh...?!

I'll  
be



going  
now.

ゴ

locked  
up in  
your  
house,  
right  
?!

that  
you  
have  
someone

You do  
remember





You  
can't  
...

So why  
are you  
going to  
school?

No!  
No you  
aren't!

Don't go  
anywhere

You'll  
be  
"going  
now"  
?



*I don't  
understand  
....!!*

*How is she  
able to go  
to school  
in such a  
situation  
...?*

STARE...

!!  
:

Please  
...  
Do  
you have  
something  
to eat  
?!

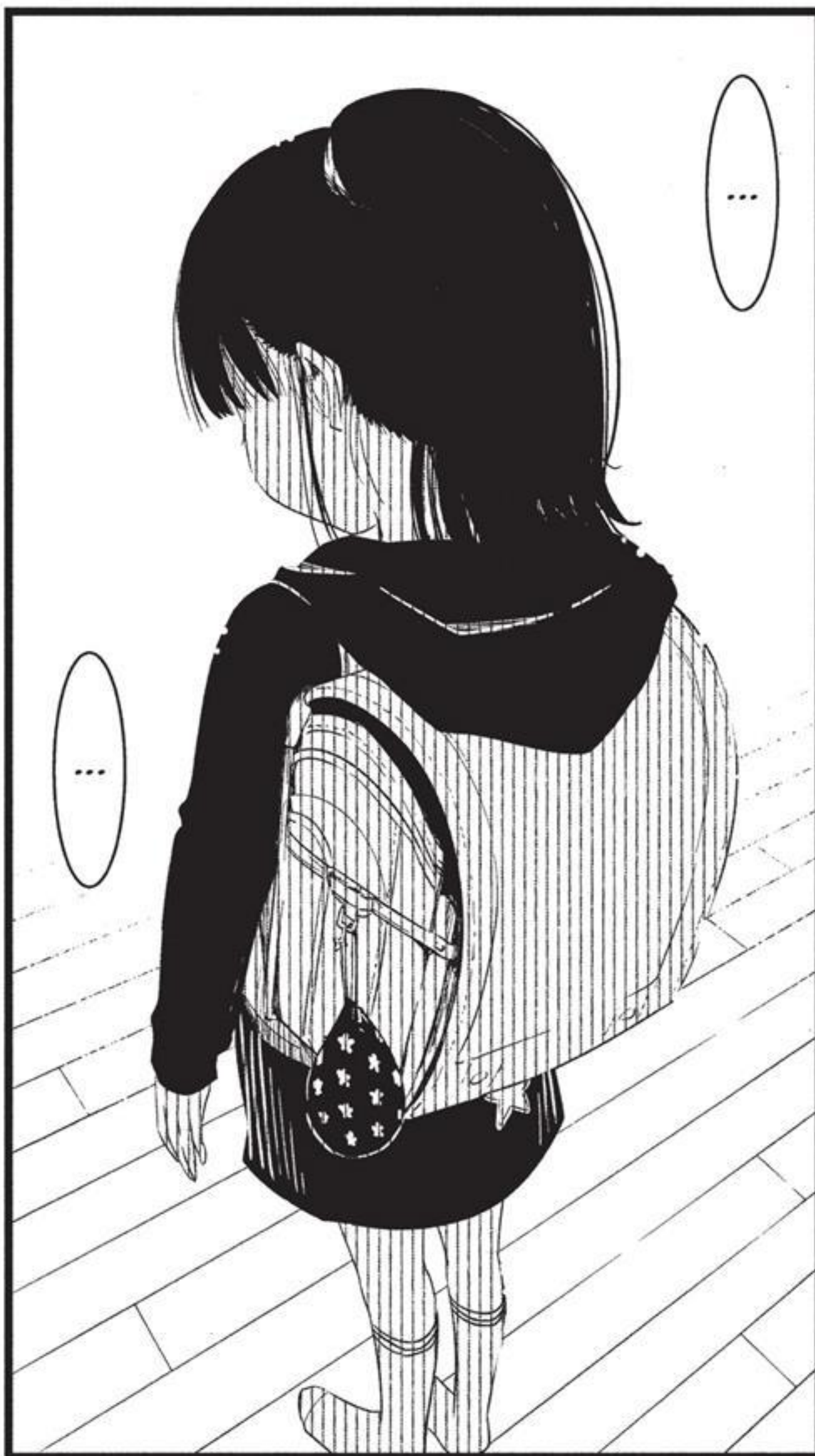
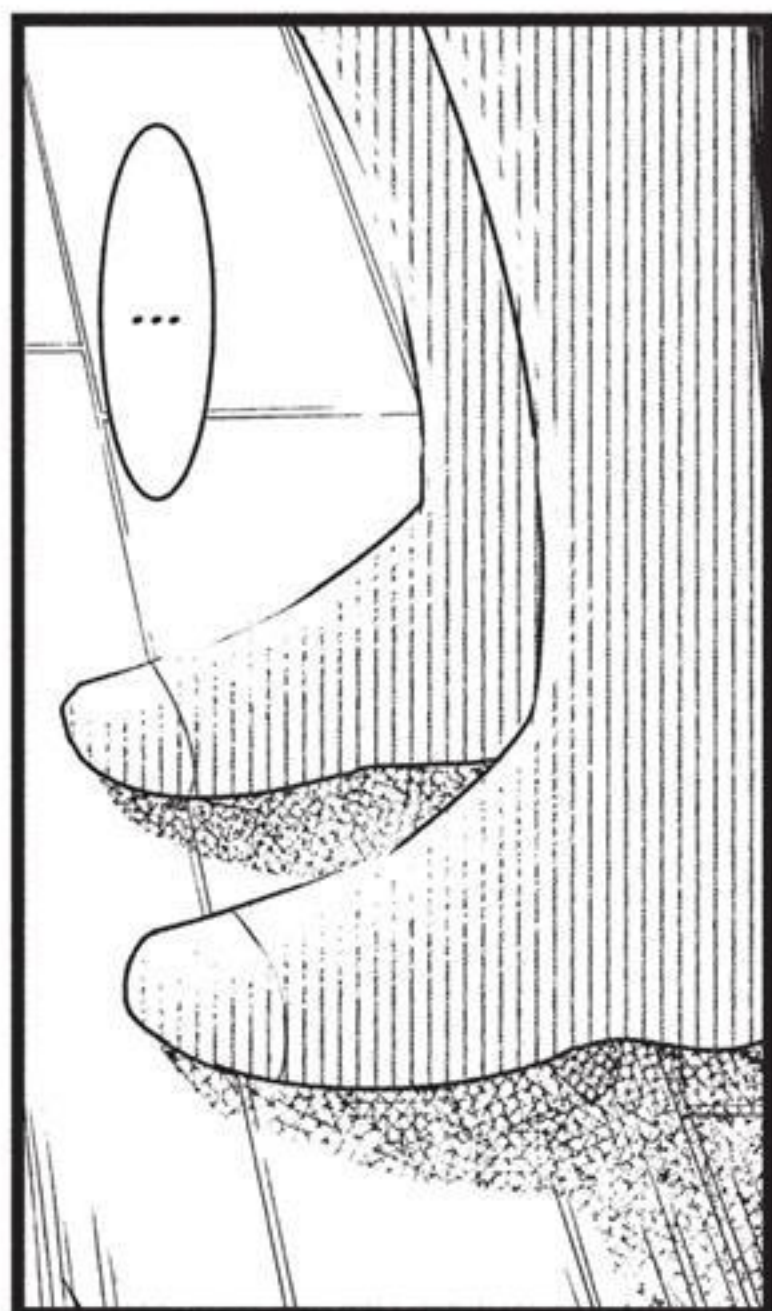
Anything,  
please...!

I'm  
hungry  
right  
now...!

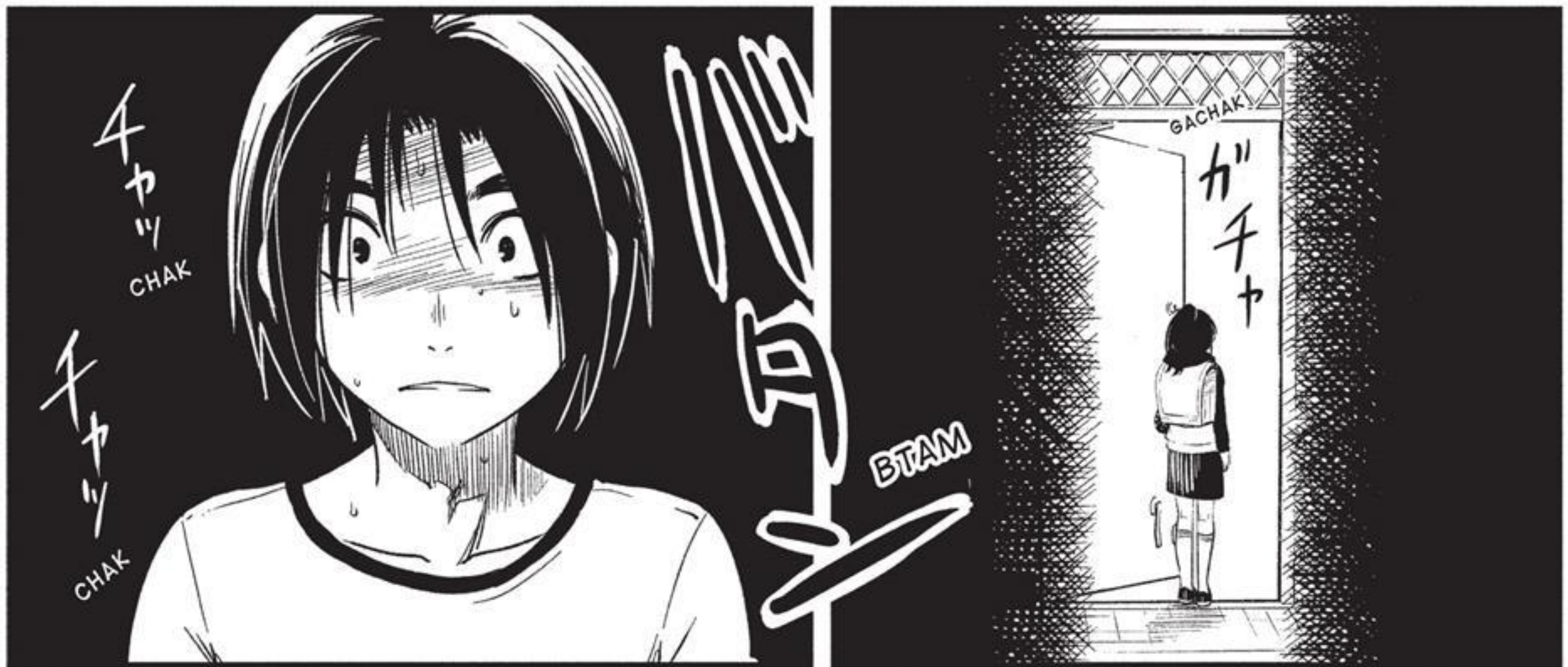
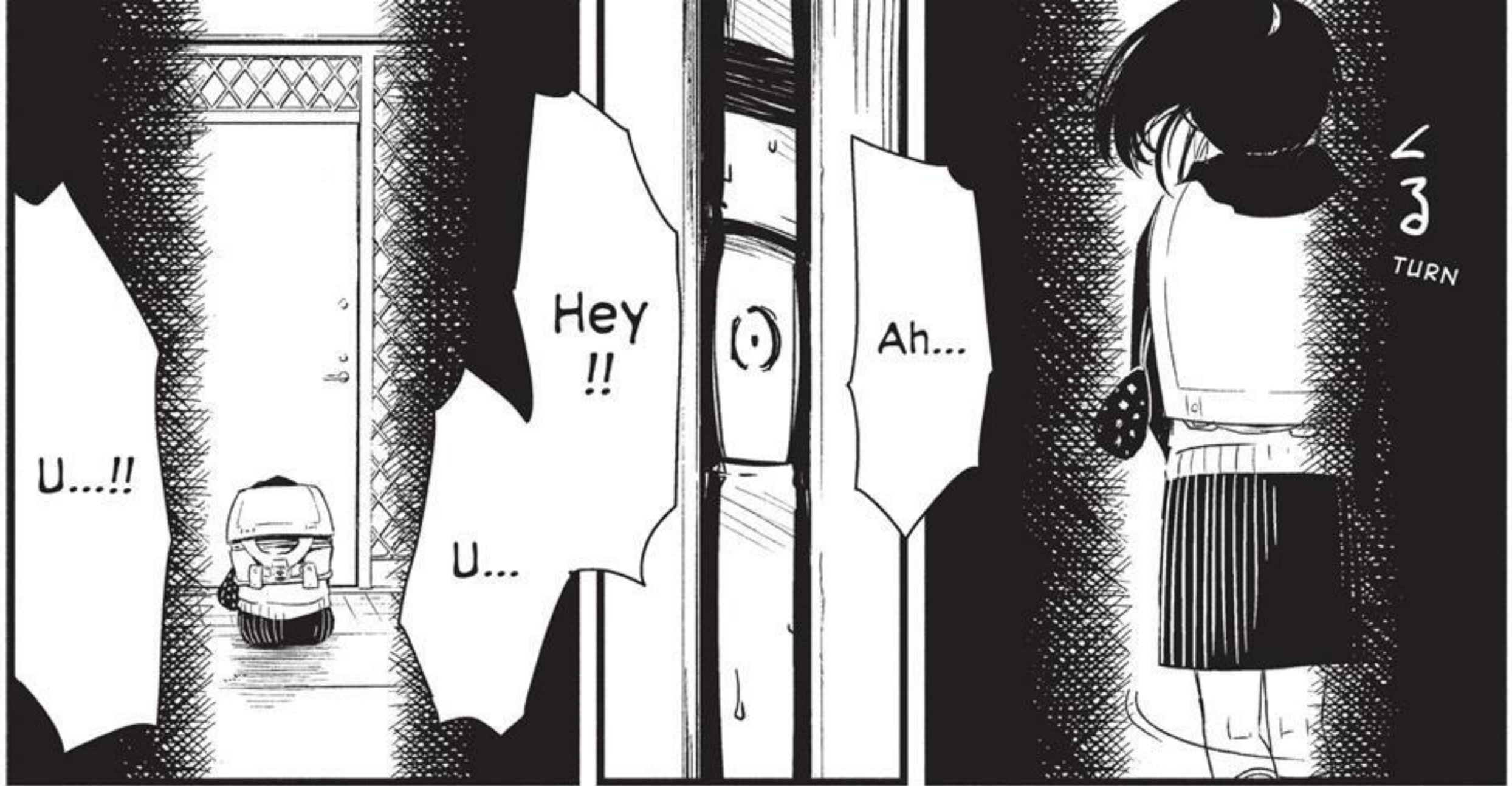
Wait  
...

Wait  
!

















Thinking

I still  
decided to  
hold out until  
I'd reached  
my limit.

was  
start-  
ing to  
tire  
me  
out.

In a way,  
I may have  
only been  
pretending to  
think about the  
issue while in  
fact throwing  
it aside.

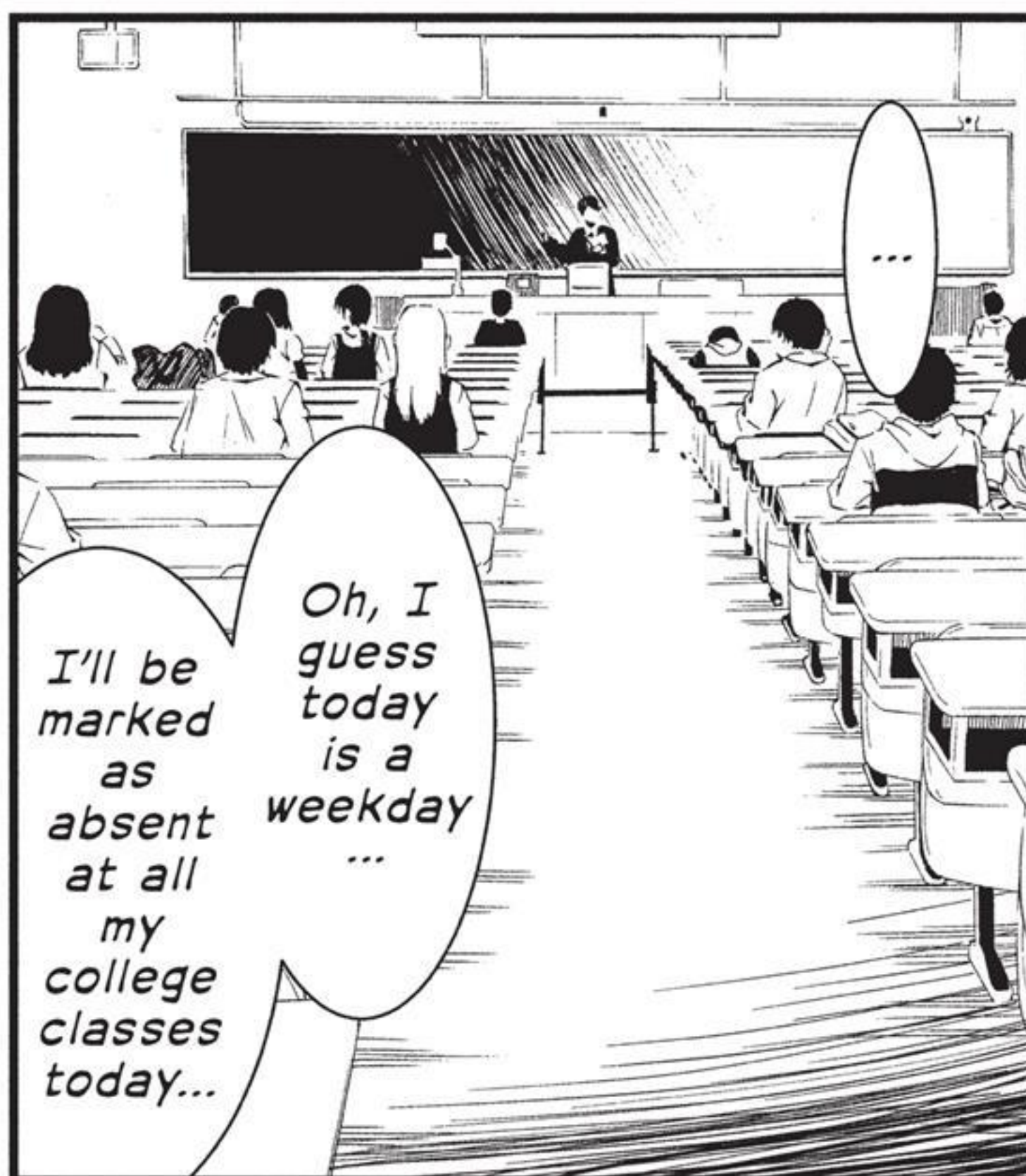
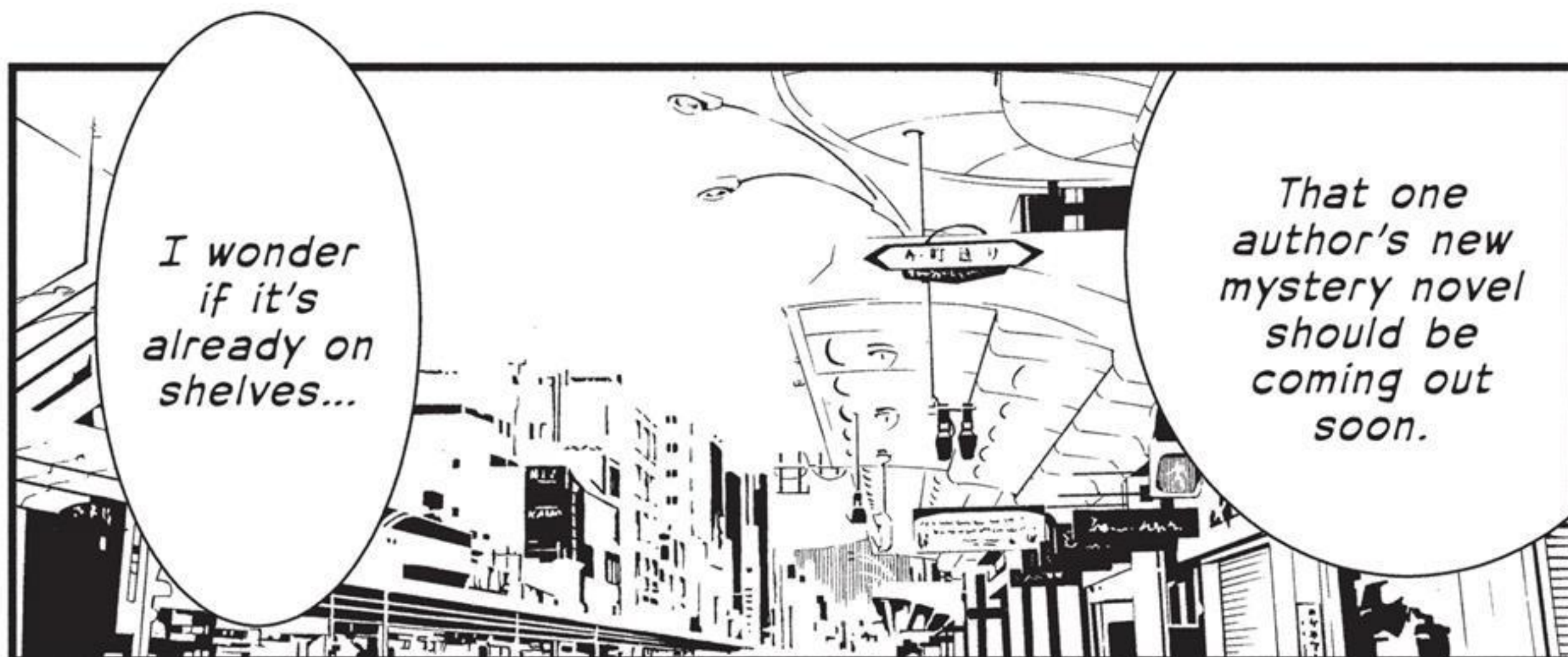
After  
deliber-  
ating,

Yes.

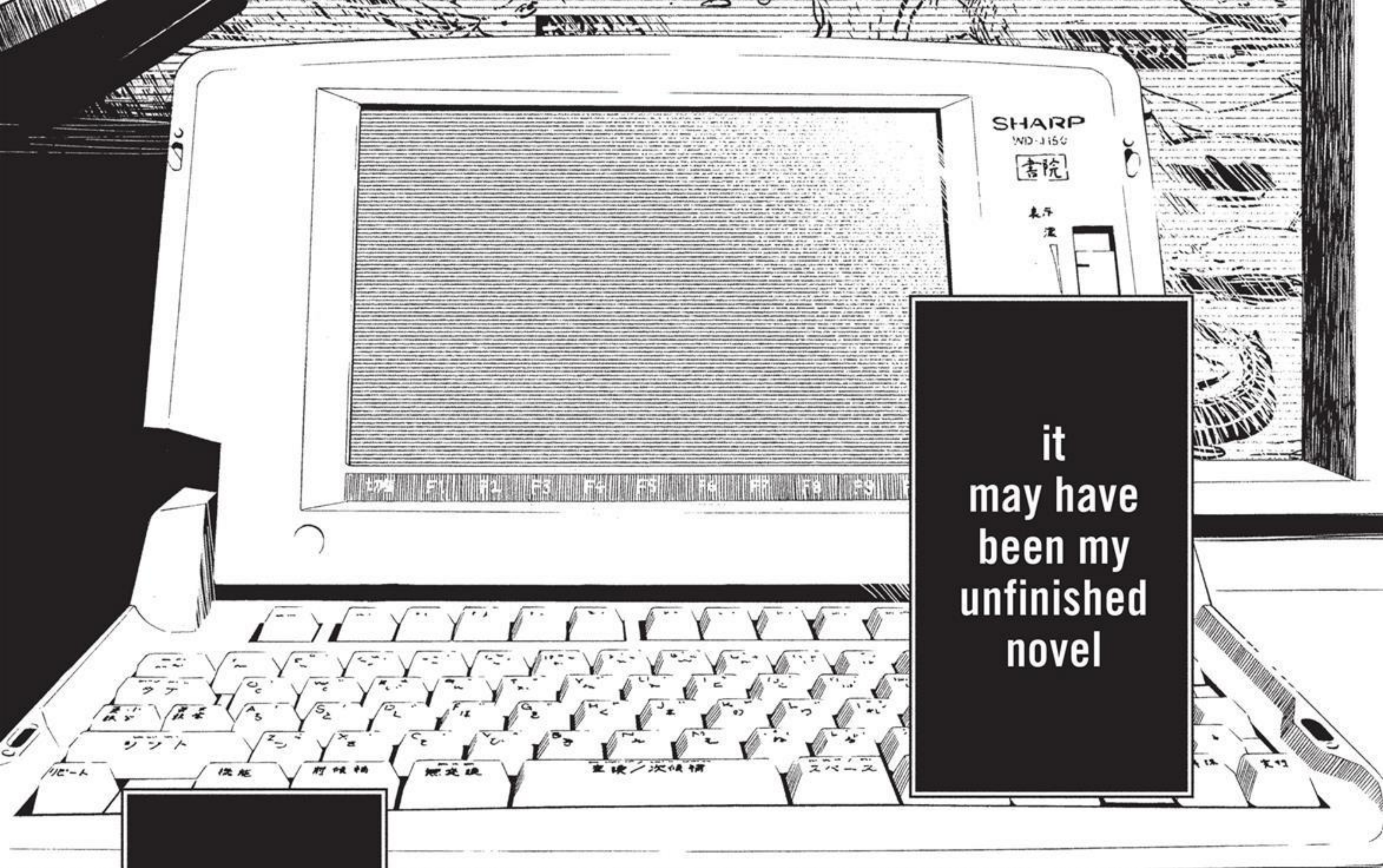












SHARP

WD-J15G

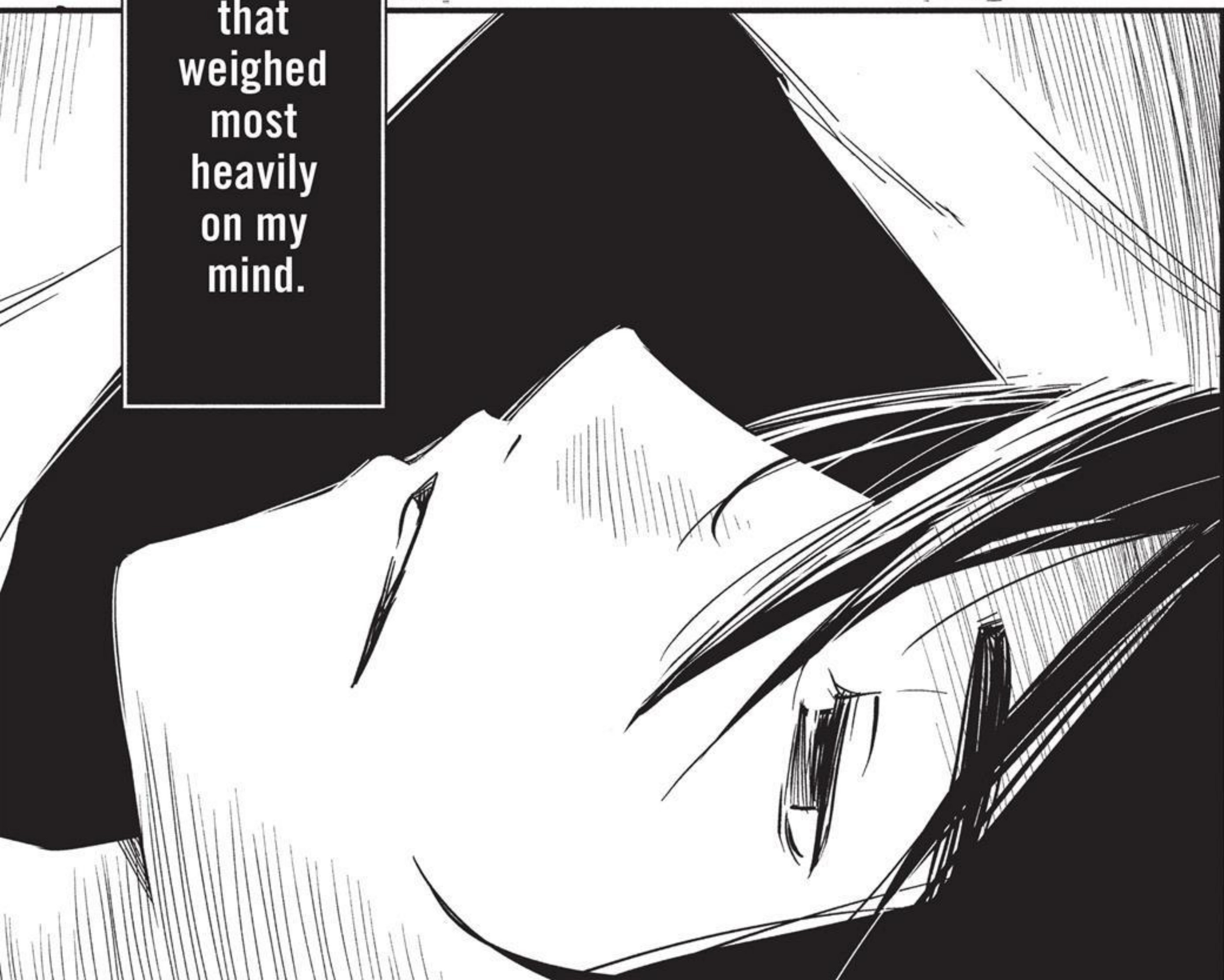
吉院

表示

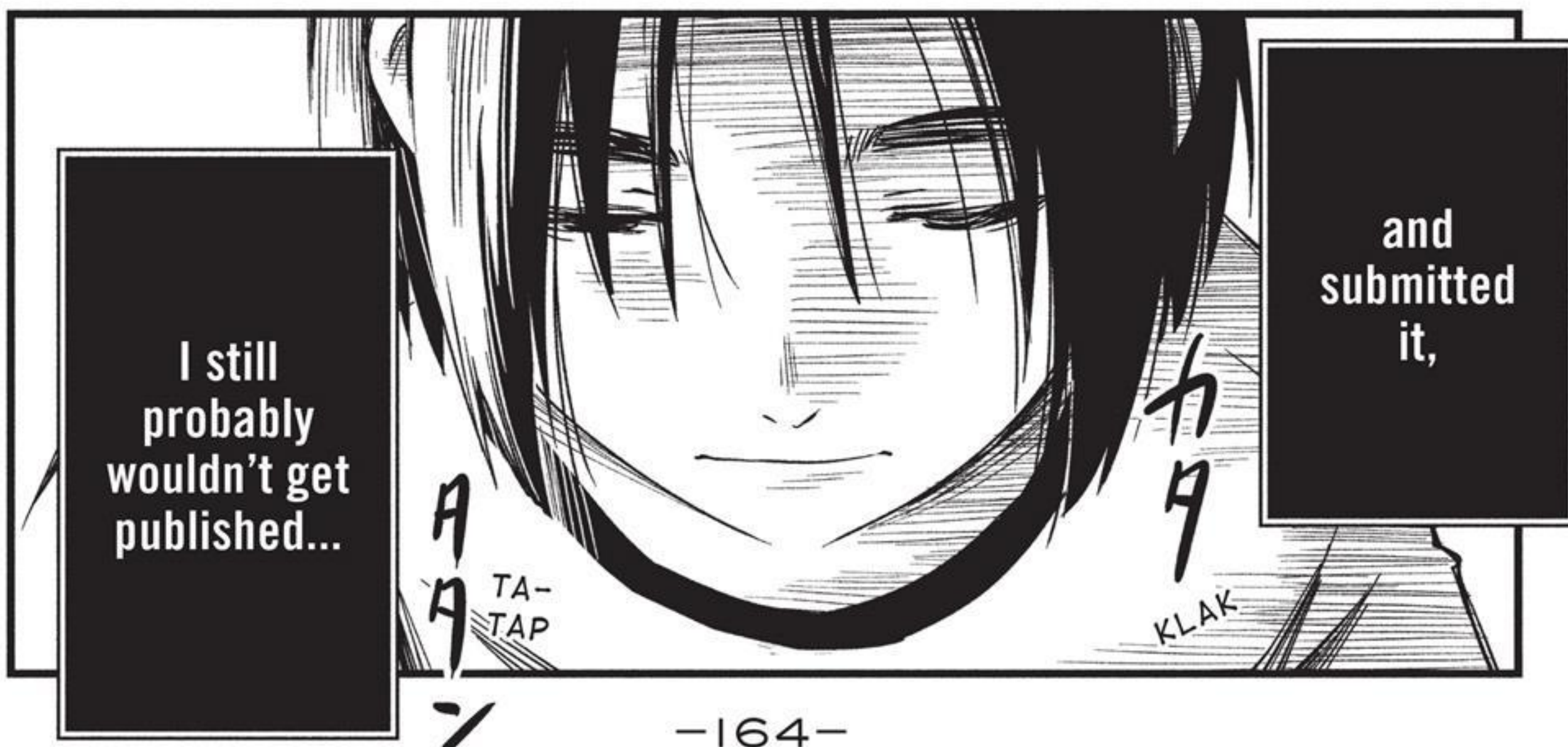
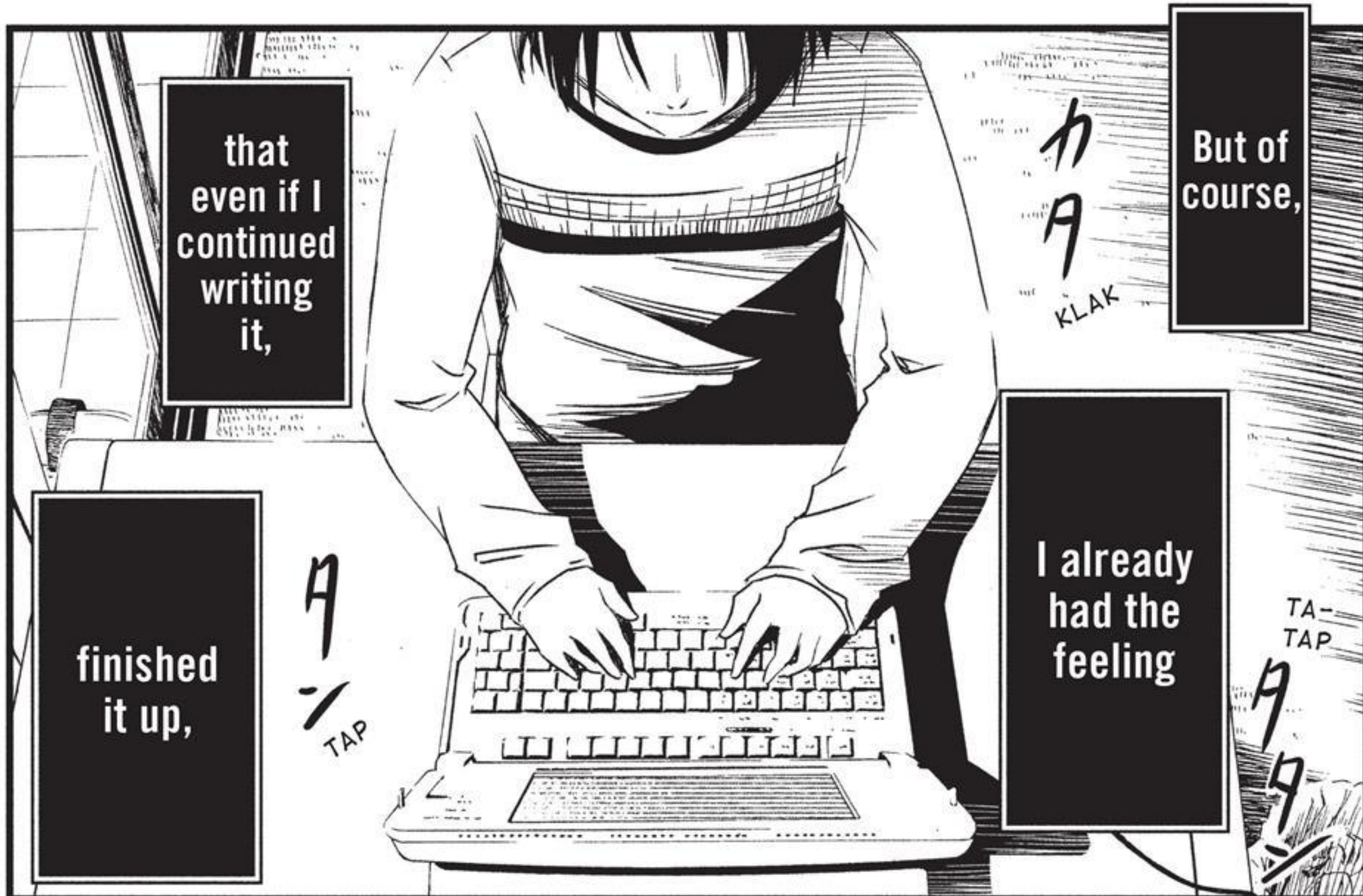
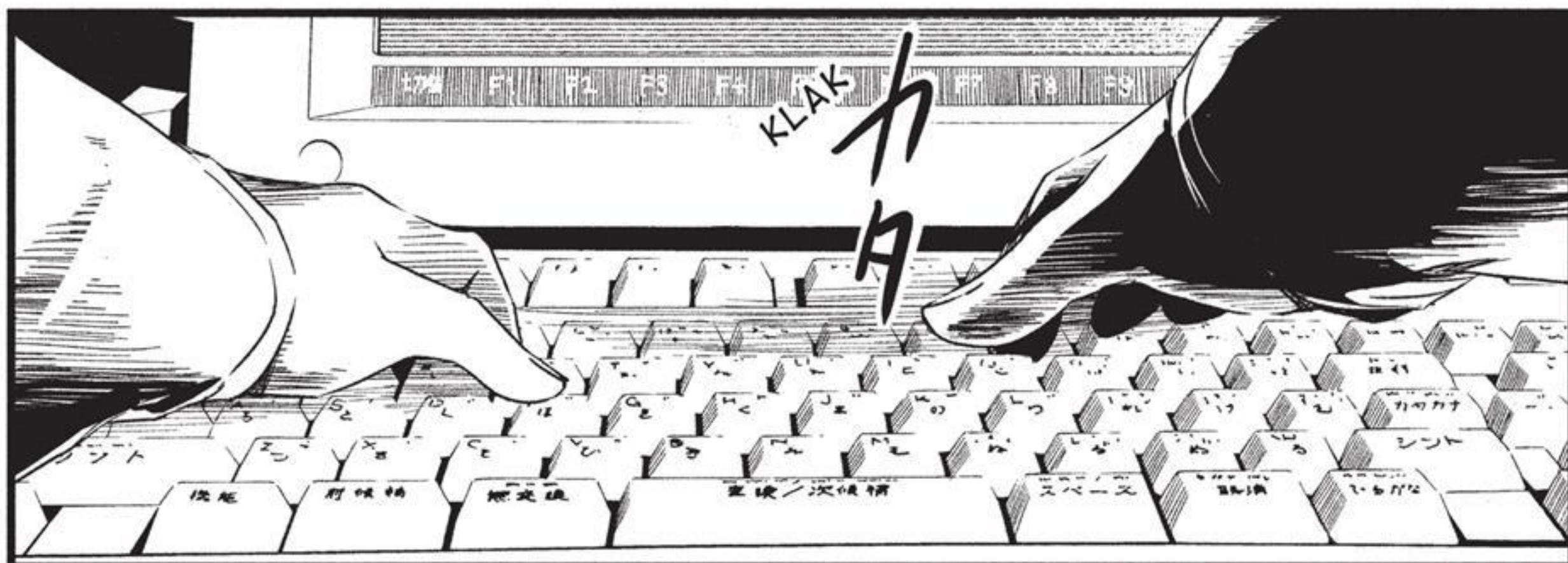
濃

it  
may have  
been my  
unfinished  
novel

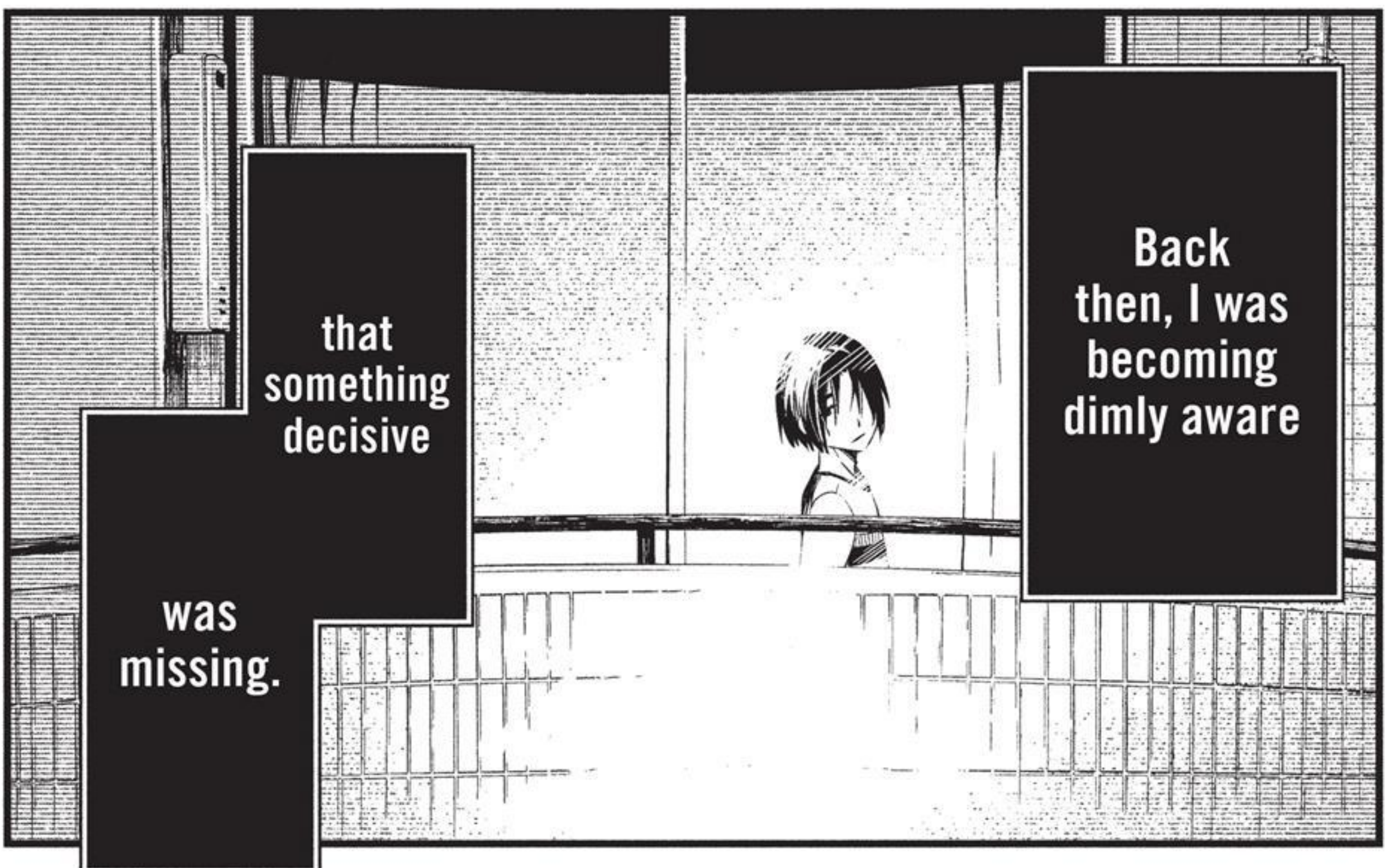
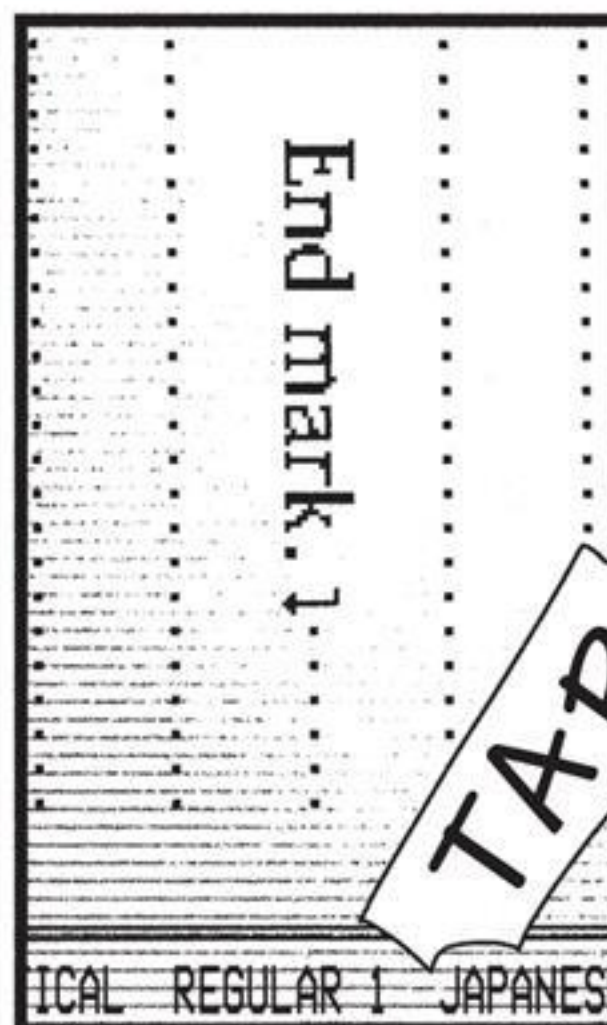
that  
weighed  
most  
heavily  
on my  
mind.



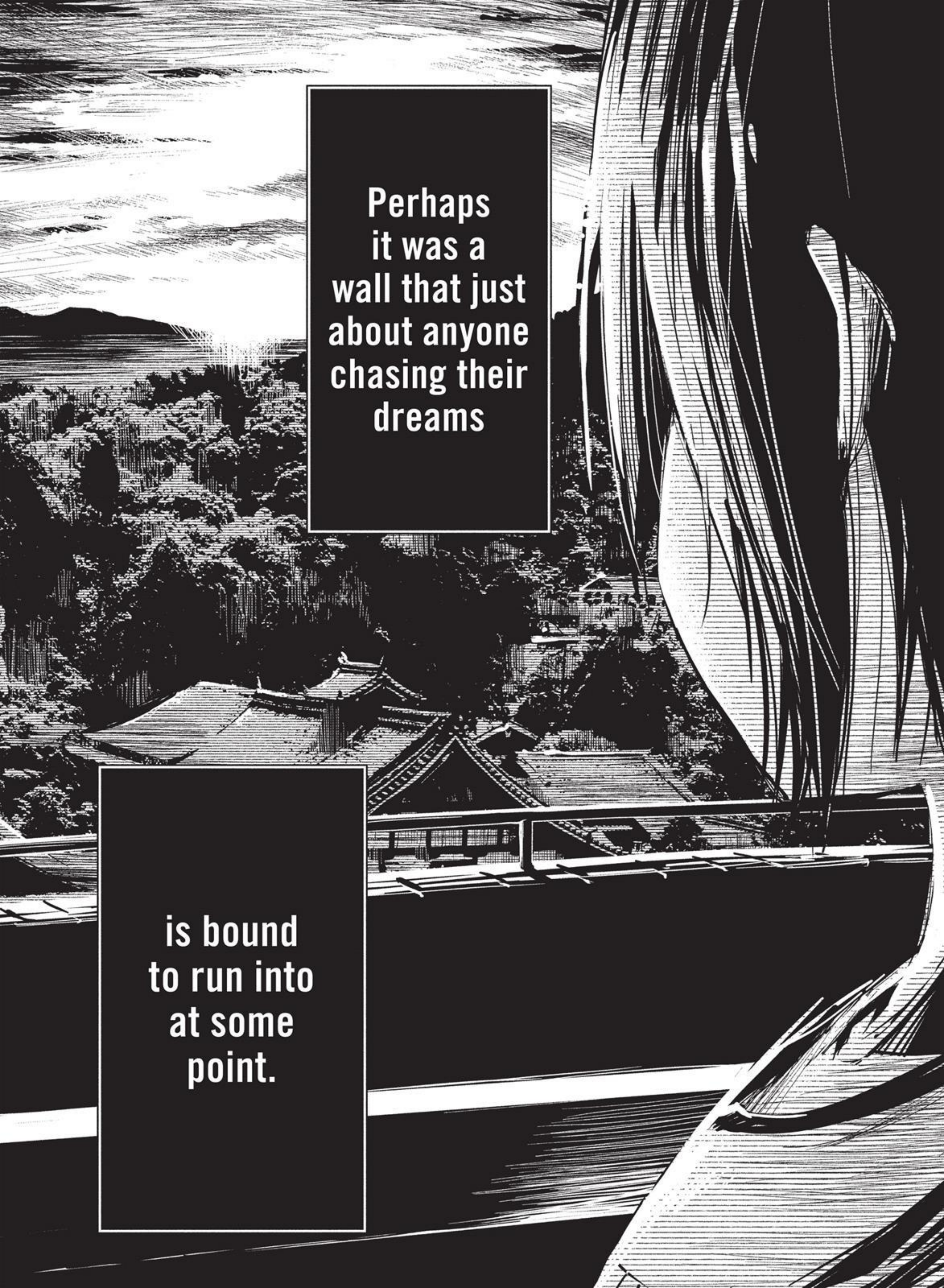












Perhaps  
it was a  
wall that just  
about anyone  
chasing their  
dreams

is bound  
to run into  
at some  
point.





that  
accepted  
being  
imprisoned  
like this.

...  
Maybe.

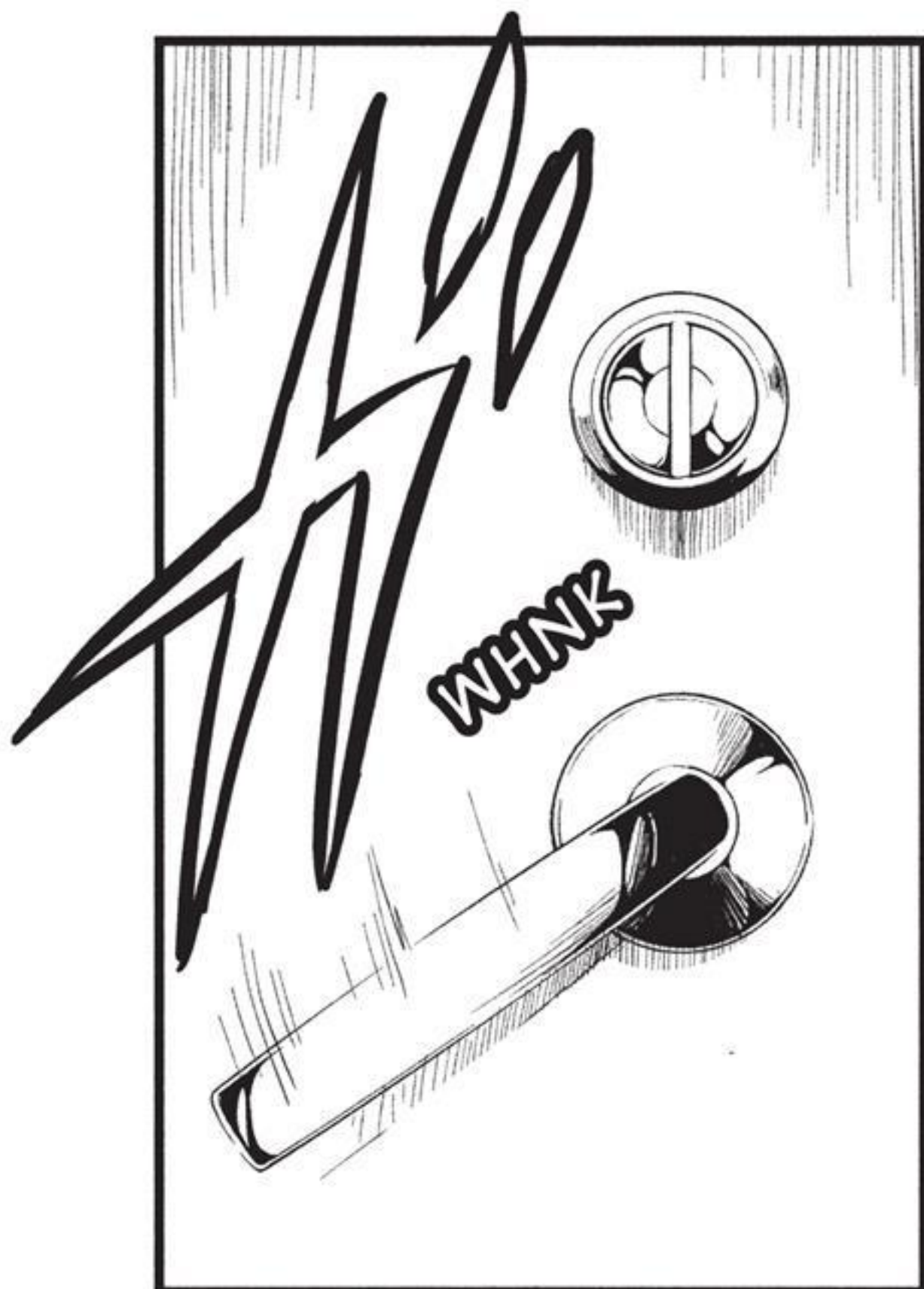
That's why  
there was a  
part of me



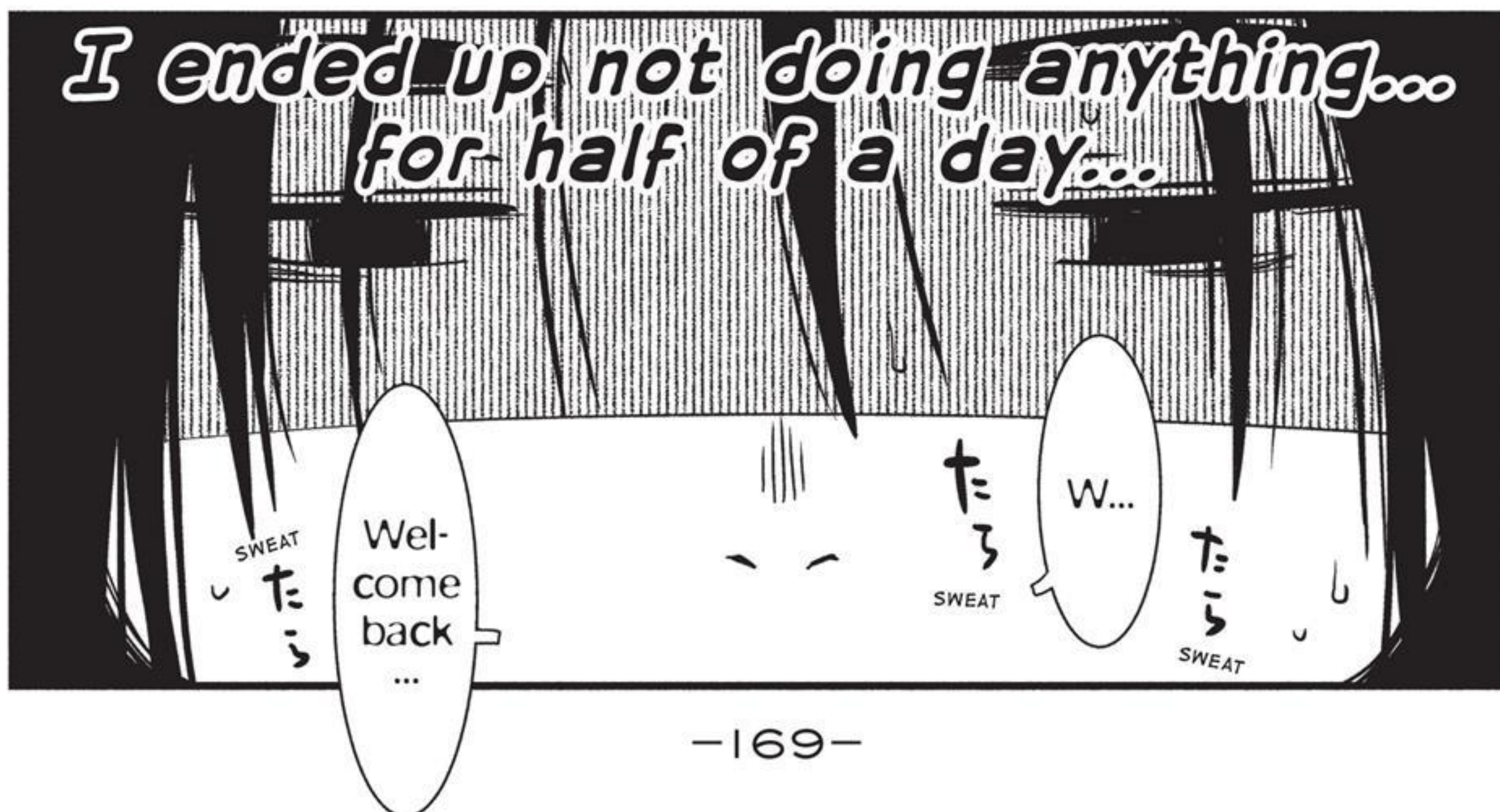
So  
long as  
I was  
stuck  
there, at  
the very  
least,

I didn't  
have to  
face that  
wall.













then  
when  
exactly

am I  
supposed  
to do  
anything,  
and just  
what can  
I do...?

ZZHHFF

す  
す  
す



If I  
can't do  
anything  
unless  
I've  
been  
driven  
into a  
corner

and I  
can't do  
anything  
once  
I'm  
actually  
in that  
corner,  
either...

ZHFF  
す

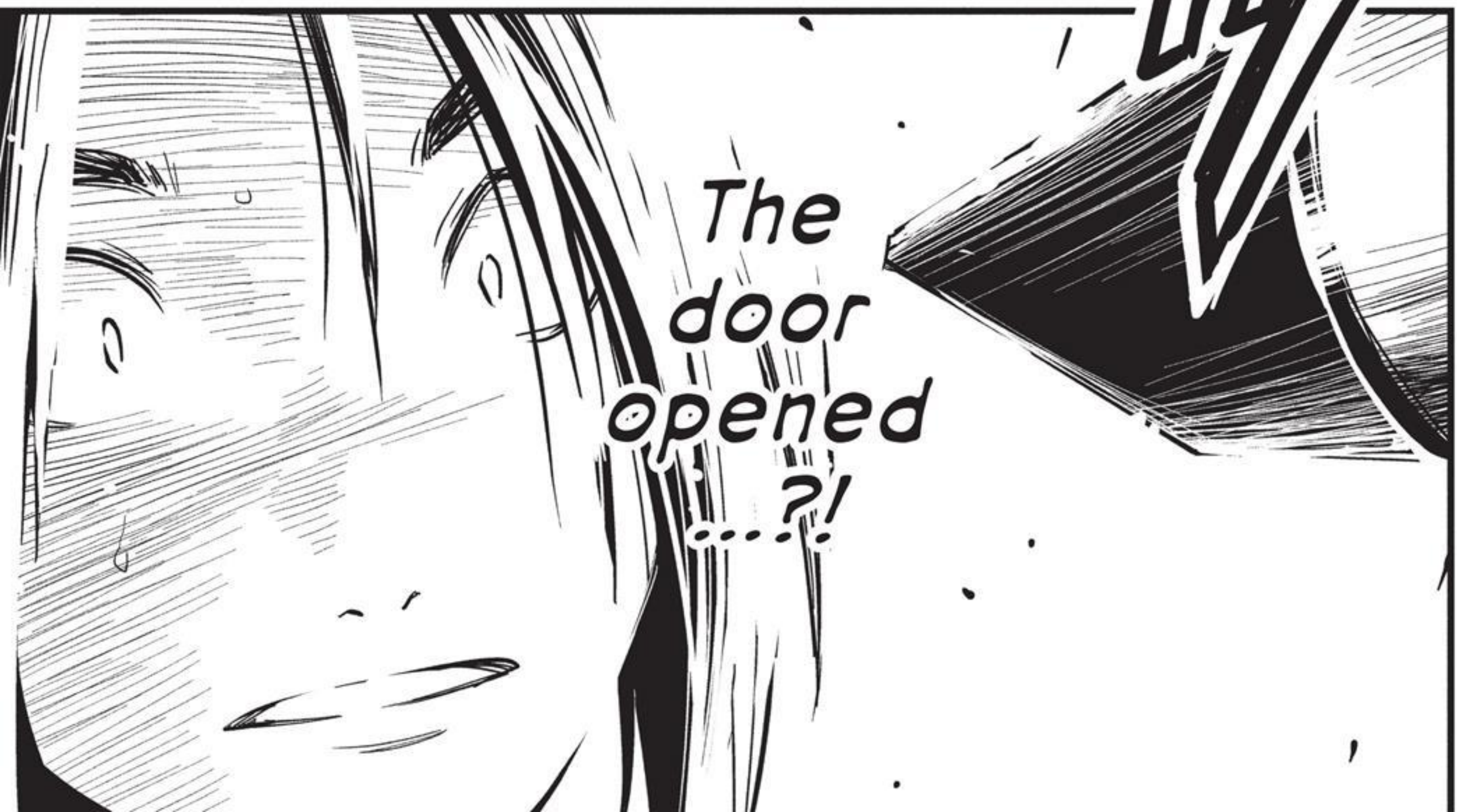


SLAM



K  
a  
c  
h  
a  
k





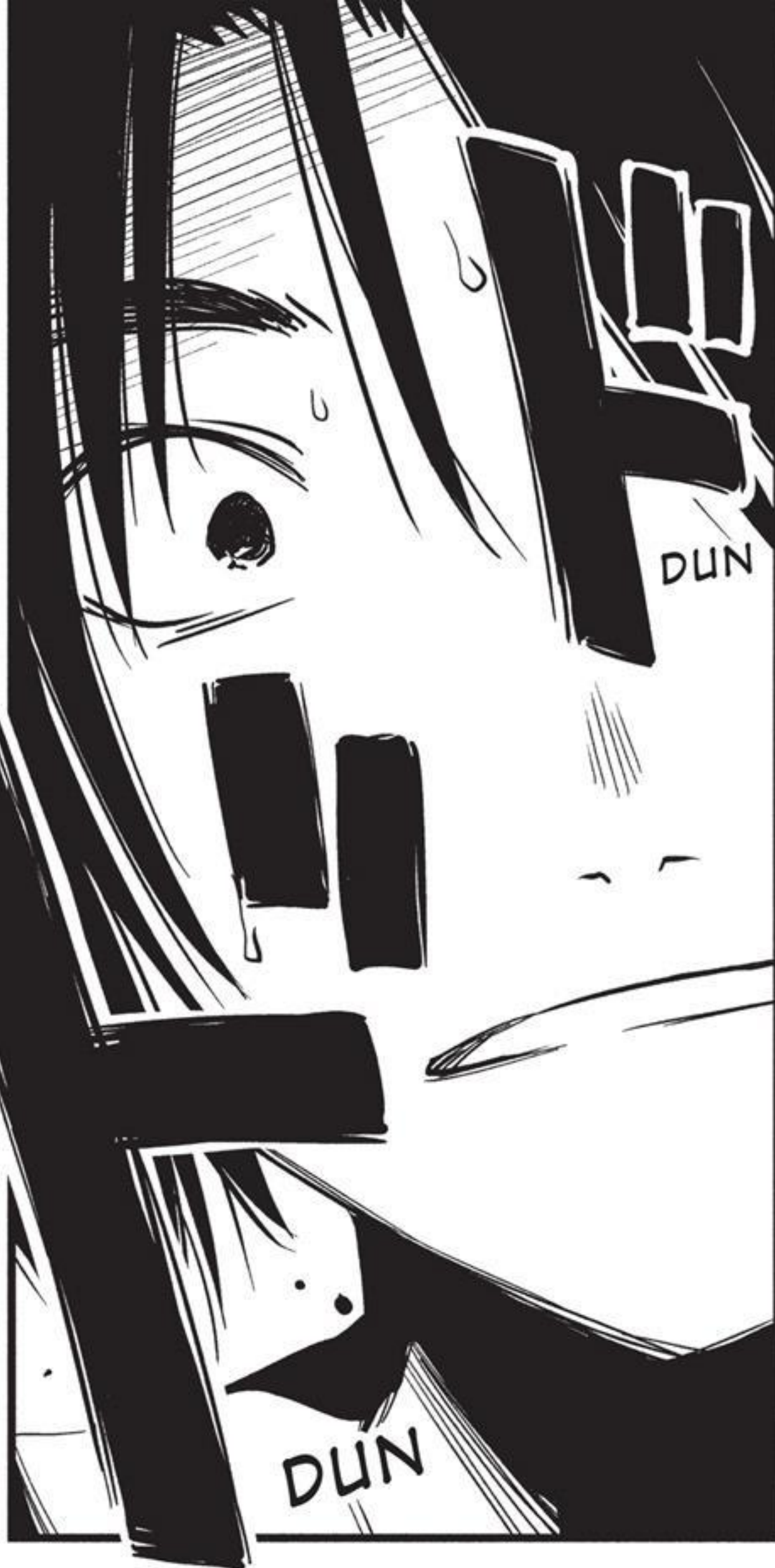




















What  
is...  
going  
on...?

Can I  
even call  
this an  
emergency  
any  
longer...?

RUSTLE

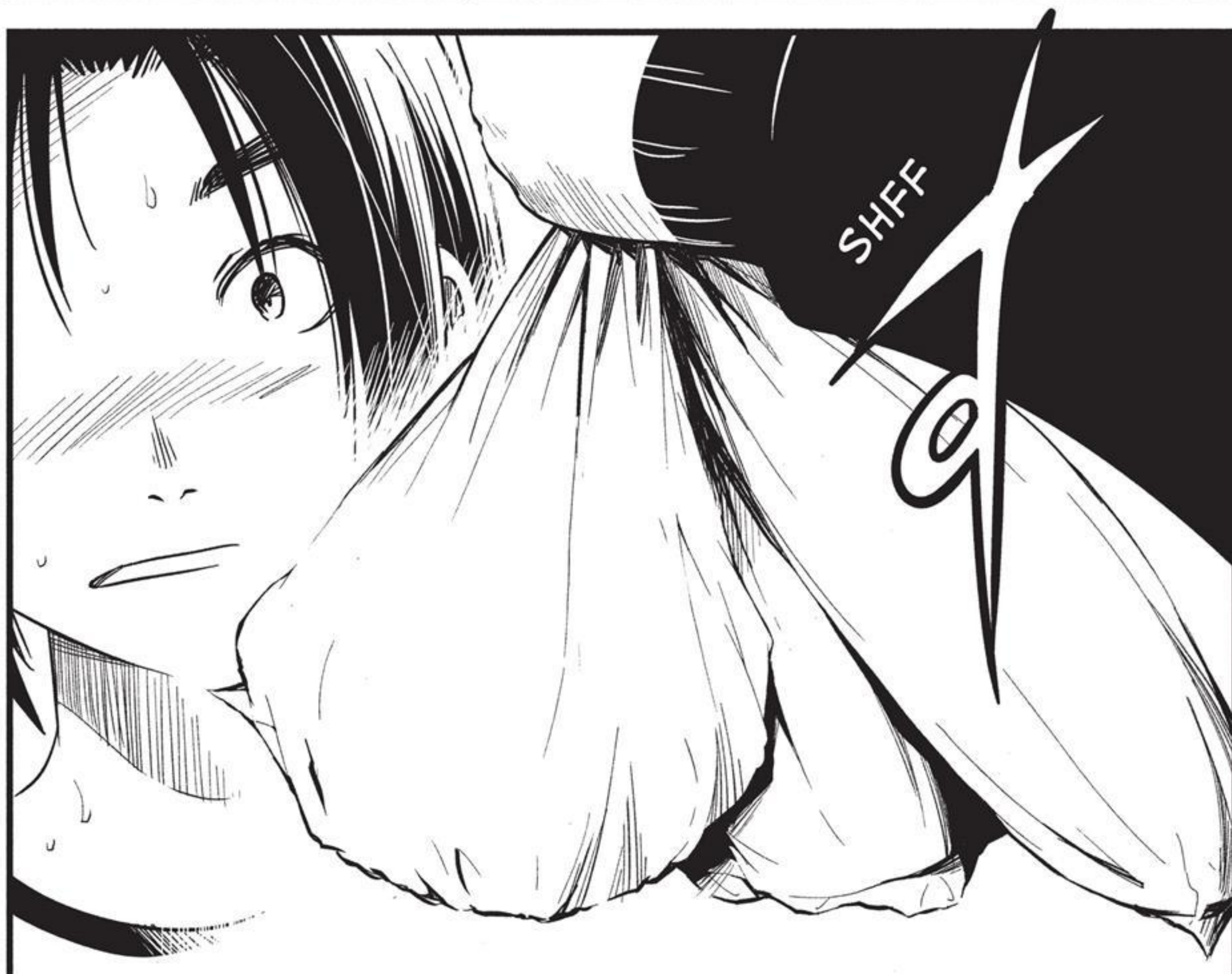
RUSTLE



...She opened  
the door and  
put down the  
knife...?

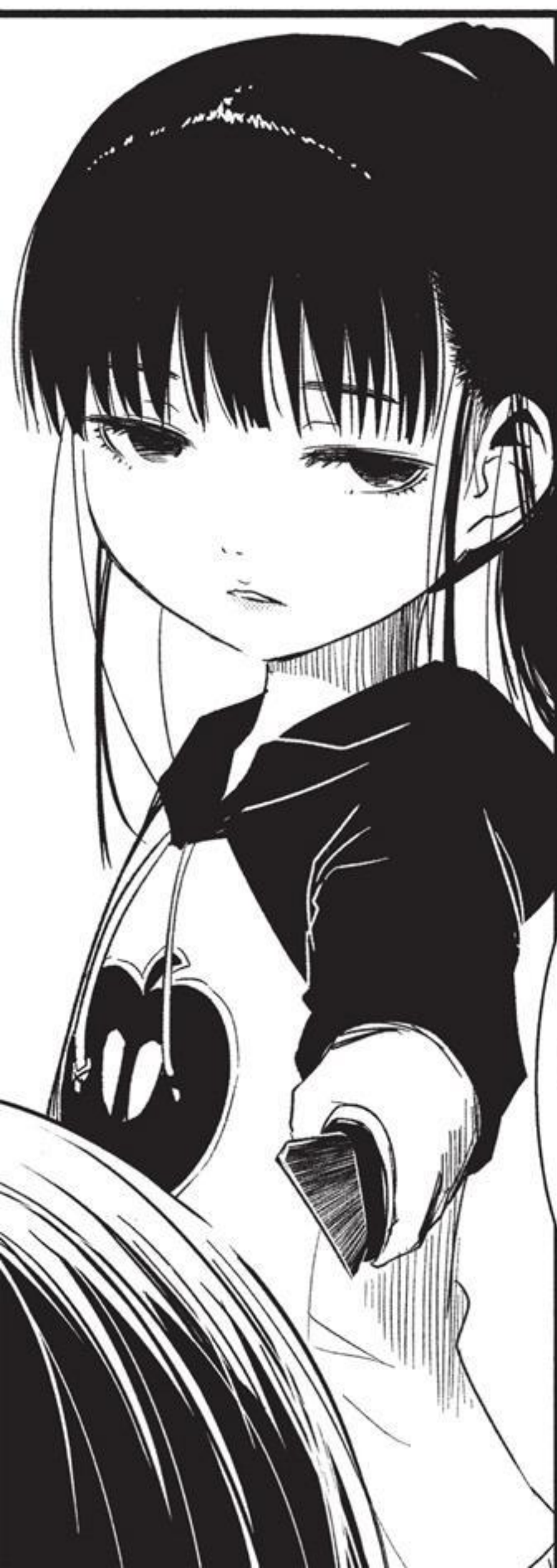
KCHIK

14+



SHFF





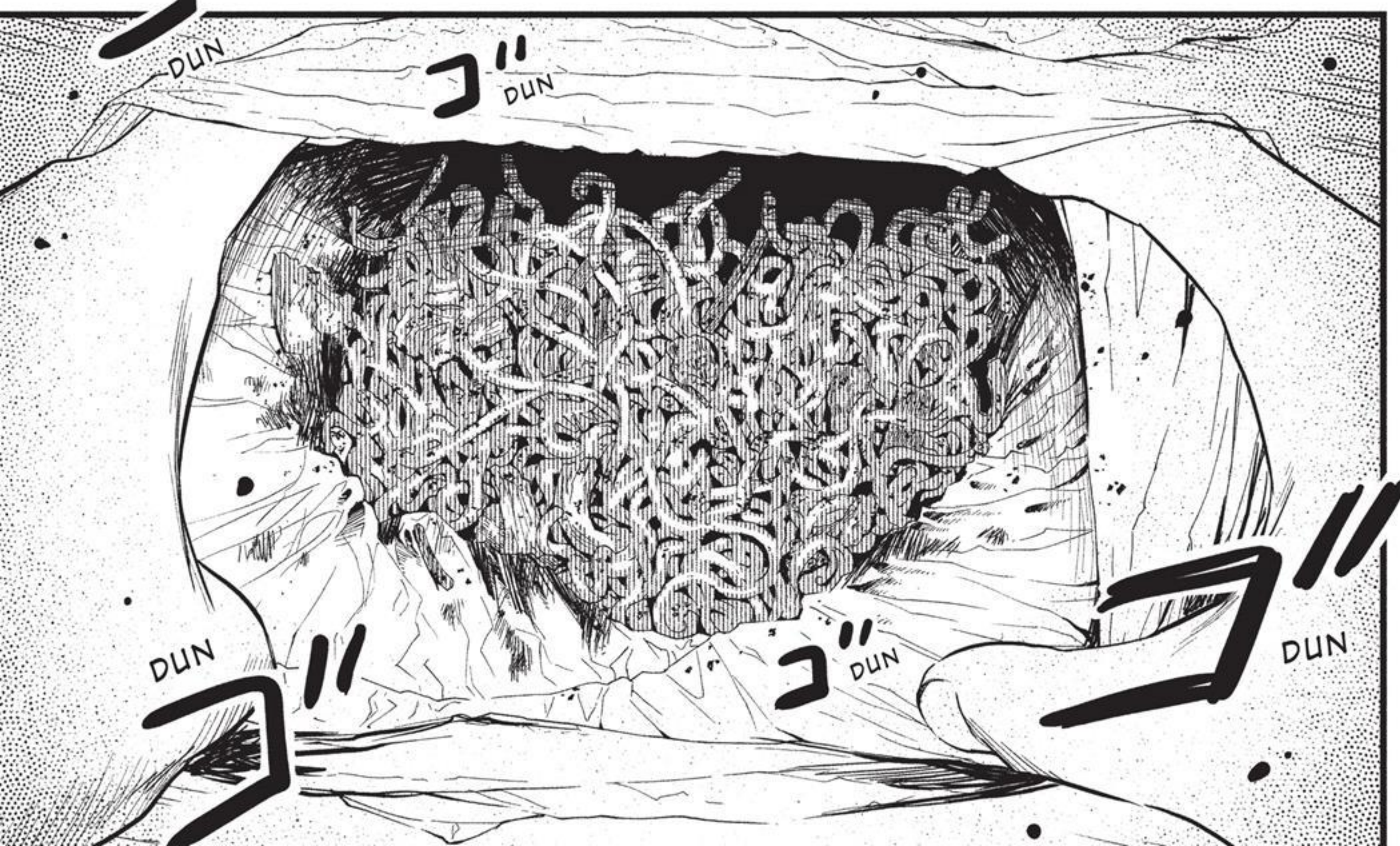








Food?











This ...

A drink.

Here you are ...



Ah...

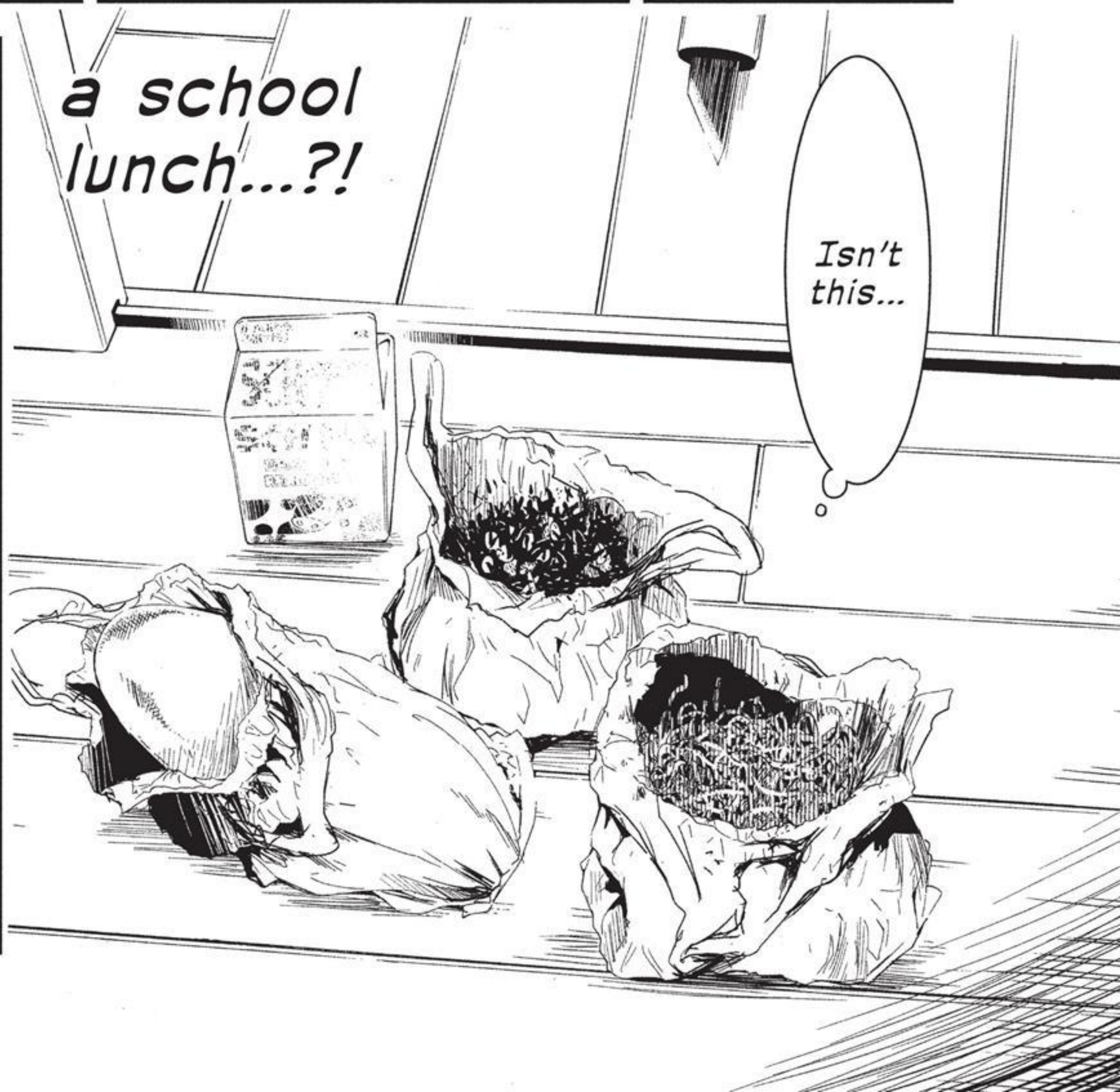
RUSTLE



So she brought this because of my request this morning ...?

Should I be thanking her...? No, no, no way...

a school lunch...?!



Isn't this...





Y=You  
can't be  
serious  
...

The milk  
and the  
bread  
is one  
thing...

but I  
don't  
need  
your  
fried  
noodles  
and  
stewed  
seaweed  
....!!



Y=You  
can't be  
serious  
...

The milk  
and the  
bread  
is one  
thing...

but I  
don't  
need  
your  
fried  
noodles  
and  
stewed  
seaweed  
....!!



Y=You  
can't be  
serious  
...

The milk  
and the  
bread  
is one  
thing...

but I  
don't  
need  
your  
fried  
noodles  
and  
stewed  
seaweed  
....!!

What am I, a stray dog...?!

A school lunch dumped into some plastic bags...?

What am I, a stray dog...?!

A school lunch dumped into some plastic bags...?

Then again ...

Ngk ...

Then again ...

Ngk ...













# YOU FORGET BEFORE

B...

Before  
...



YOU  
ARE  
S  
U  
P  
P  
O  
S  
E  
D  
T  
H  
A  
N  
K  
S  
!!

TO  
G  
I  
V  
E

This grade  
school kid,  
whose  
presence  
was so  
dim

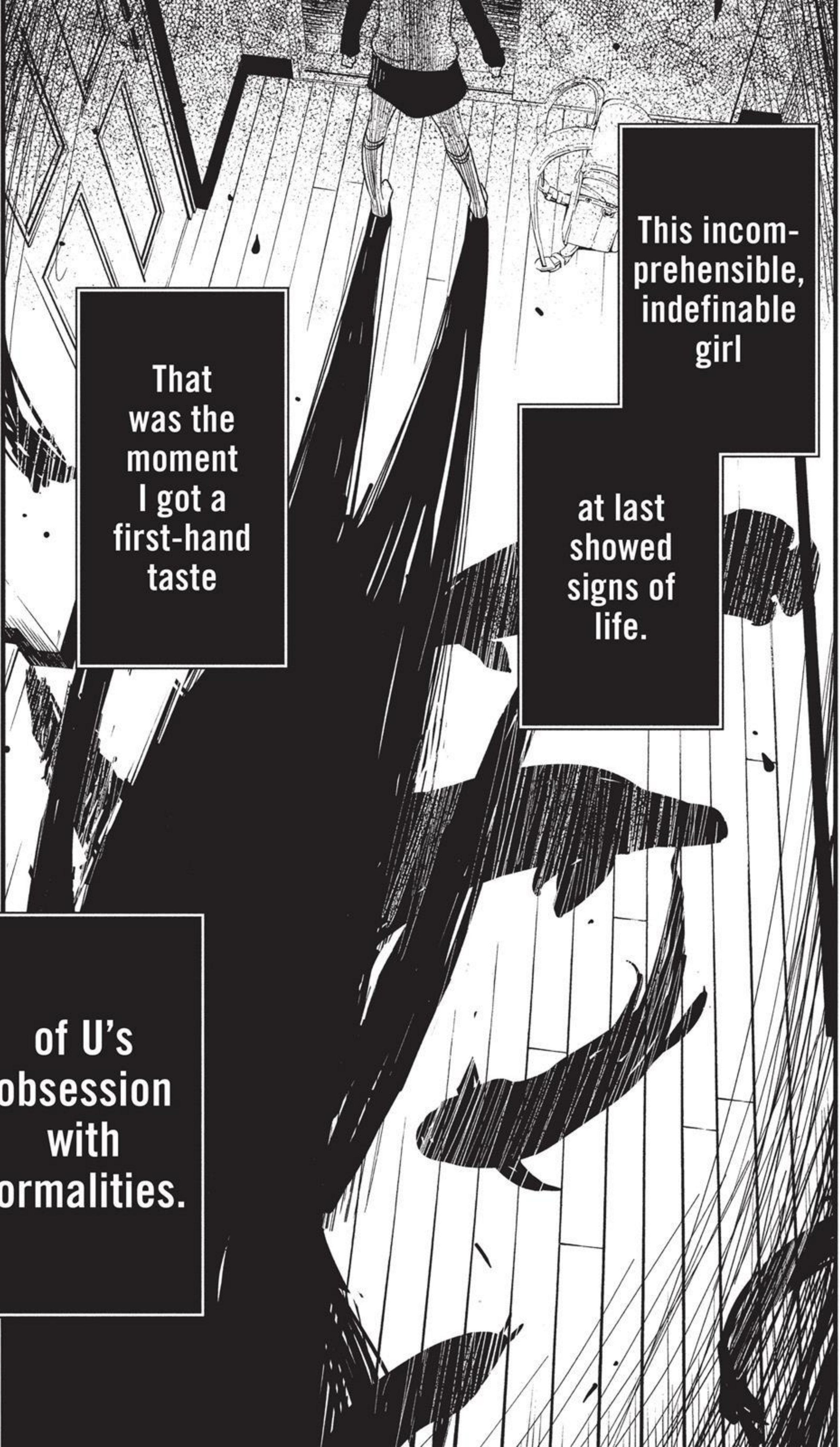
I could  
barely  
tell if  
she was  
alive...

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE





**This incom-  
prehensible,  
indefinable  
girl**

**That  
was the  
moment  
I got a  
first-hand  
taste**

**at last  
showed  
signs of  
life.**

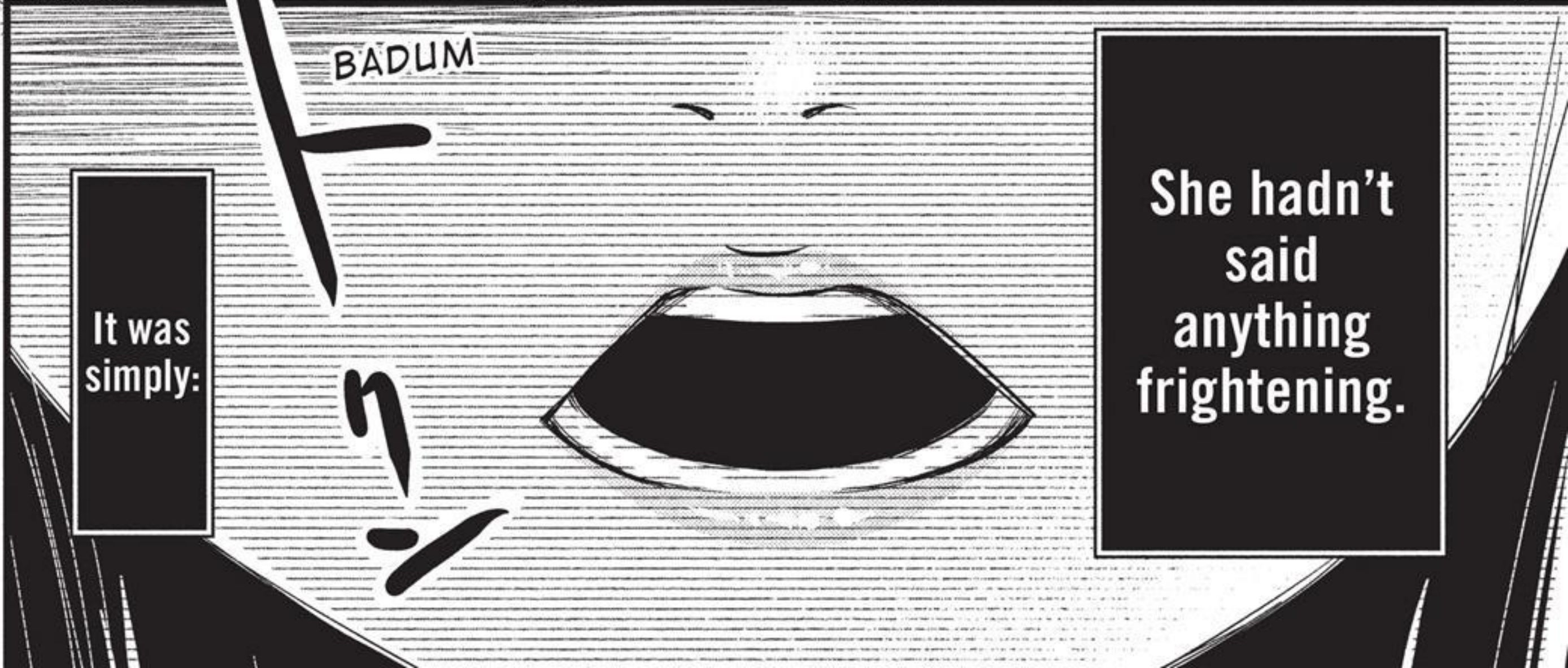
**of U's  
obsession  
with  
formalities.**





she was  
so quiet I  
couldn't  
hear her.

The first  
time U  
spoke  
to me,



It was  
simply:

She hadn't  
said  
anything  
frightening.






*Nice  
to  
meet  
you.*

...  
and  
that  
was  
all.

I was  
able to  
realize  
that now.

*Continued in Volume 2*



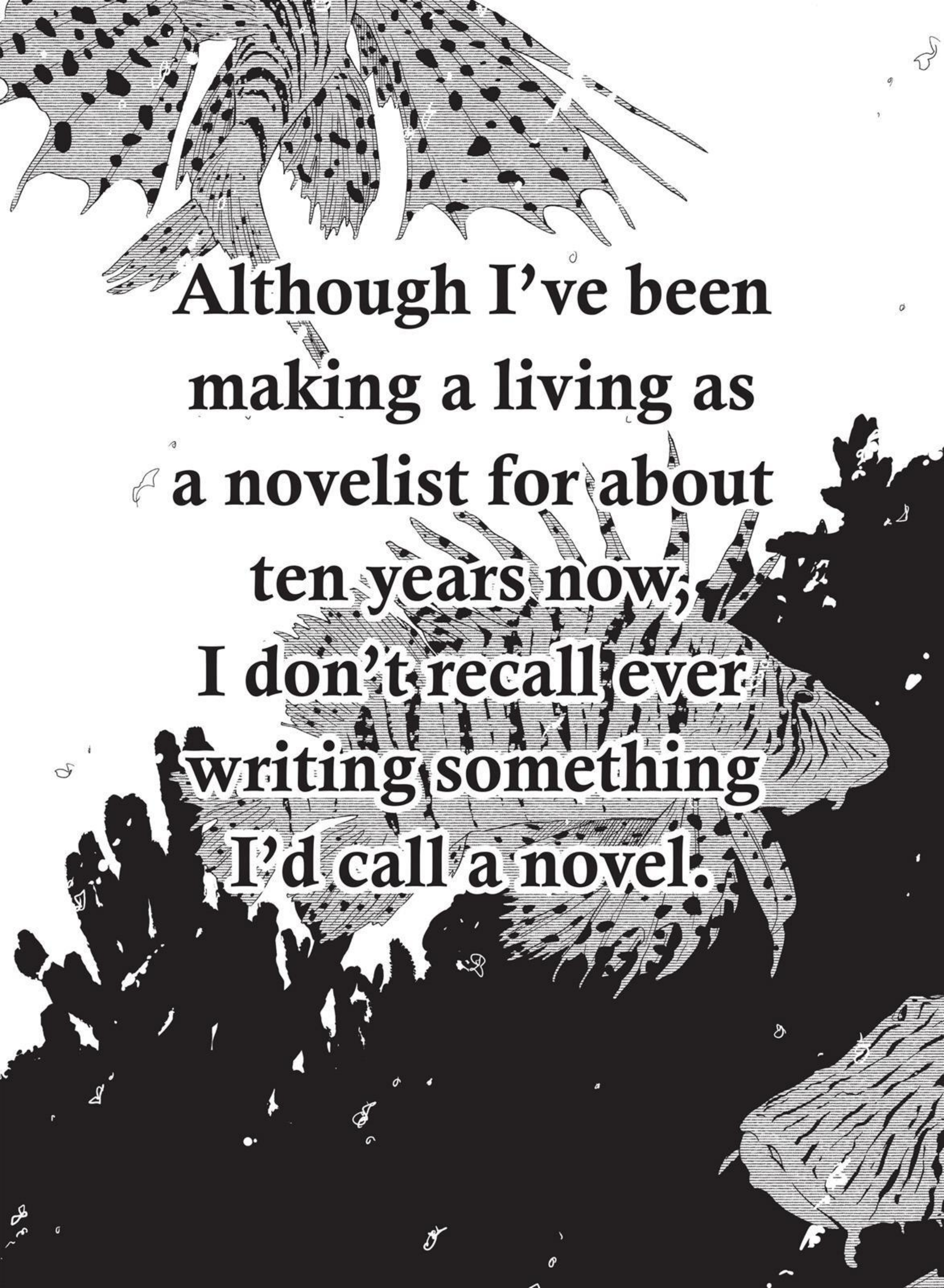


"My mom and dad are gone."  
A messy living room,  
a dry sink, an empty refrigerator.  
The young man escapes from the closet  
and learns the truth about U as their  
imperfect relationship begins to change.

# Imperfect Girl 2

Coming This Winter





**Although I've been  
making a living as  
a novelist for about  
ten years now,  
I don't recall ever  
writing something  
I'd call a novel.**



# **Imperfect Girl 1**

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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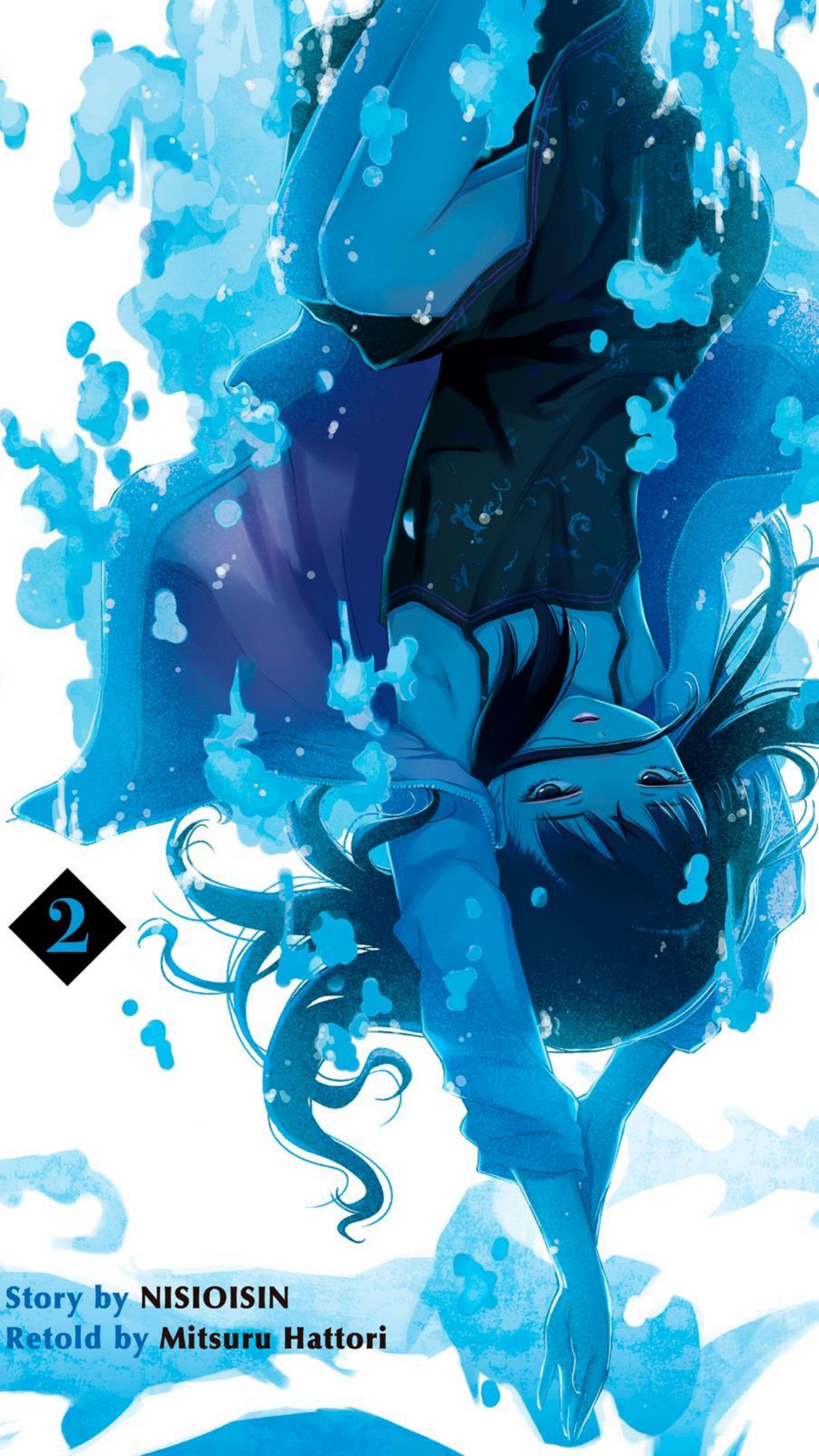


# Imperfect

# Girl

2

Story by NISIOISIN  
Retold by Mitsuru Hattori





# Imperfect Girl

## 2

Story by  
**NISIOISIN**

Retold by  
**Mitsuru Hattori**

Original Character  
Concept:  
**Foo Midori**





**This was ten years ago.  
I was a college student  
at the time, and I had been  
kidnapped and imprisoned by U,  
an elementary school student.**

**I was nothing more than  
an aspiring author then,  
but this was the incident  
that caused me to become  
a real author.**





I don't  
recall ever  
writing  
anything  
that can  
be called  
a "novel."

for  
about  
ten  
years  
now,

Though  
I've been  
earning a  
living from  
writing  
novels




And  
you'd  
be  
right.

I am being  
contrarian  
when I say  
that.

Reading  
that may  
make you think,  
"Oh, there he  
goes again,  
always being so  
contrarian."

I  
know.





I've  
chosen  
to grow  
imbalanced,  
chosen  
to suffer  
loss.

When  
I think  
about it,  
everything  
I've done  
for the  
past ten  
years

has  
been  
ear-  
nestly  
contra-  
rian.

Yet  
somehow  
or other,

I've  
continued  
to be a  
novelist for  
ten years  
now. Even I'm  
impressed  
by that  
fact.

I've  
devoted  
myself to  
leading a  
perverse  
person's  
life.





I can't  
thank  
myself for  
my talent  
for writing  
novels.

It  
isn't  
a  
gift,

and I can't  
say it was  
even luck.

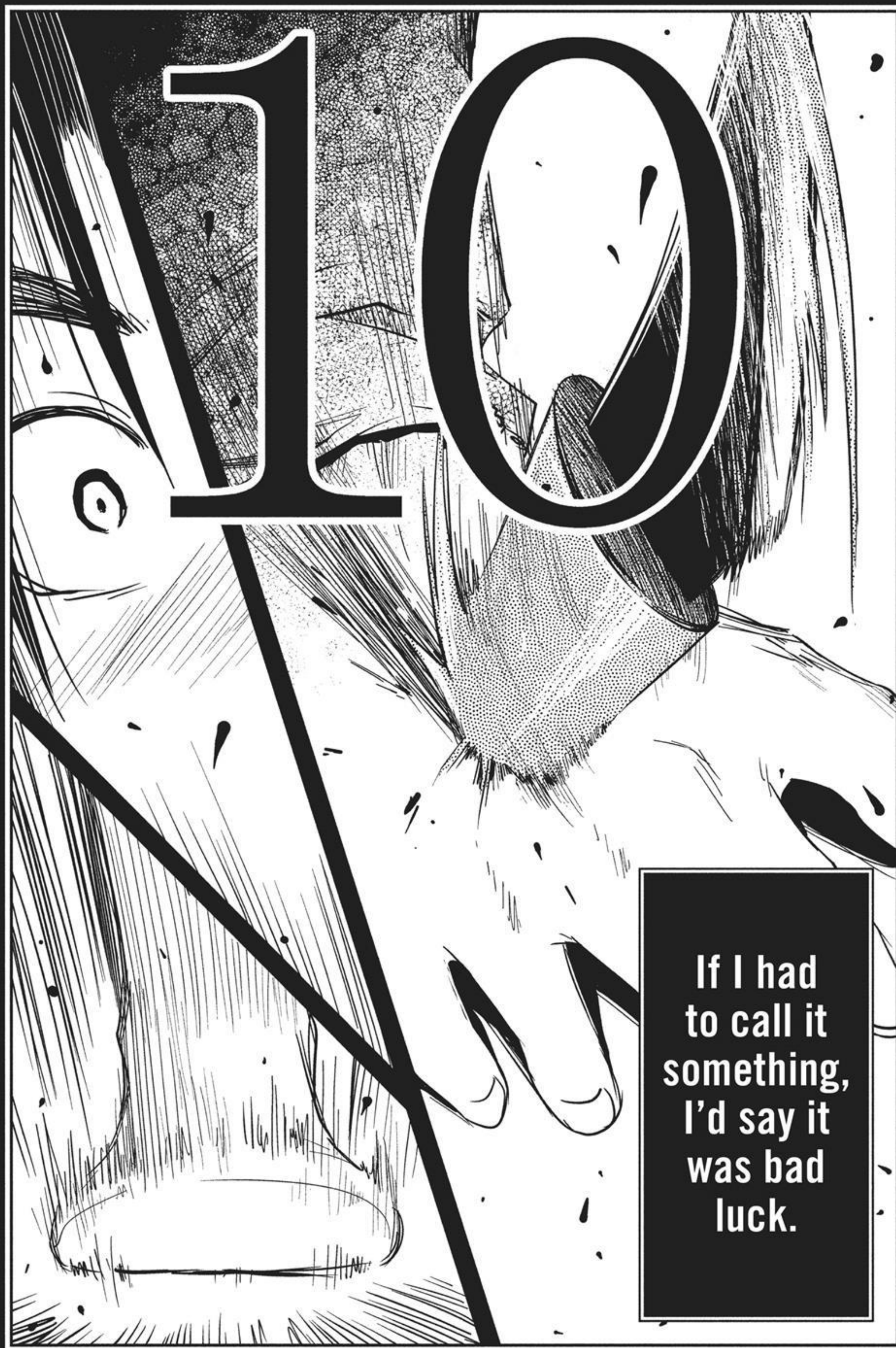
In  
other  
words,

despite  
earning  
my keep  
for this  
long as a  
novelist,

But  
at the  
same  
time,  
I feel  
guilty.

I've never  
once felt  
confident  
that anything  
I wrote could  
be called  
a novel.





If I had  
to call it  
something,  
I'd say it  
was bad  
luck.





THANK YOU FOR THIS MEET!

THANK YOU FOR THIS MEET!

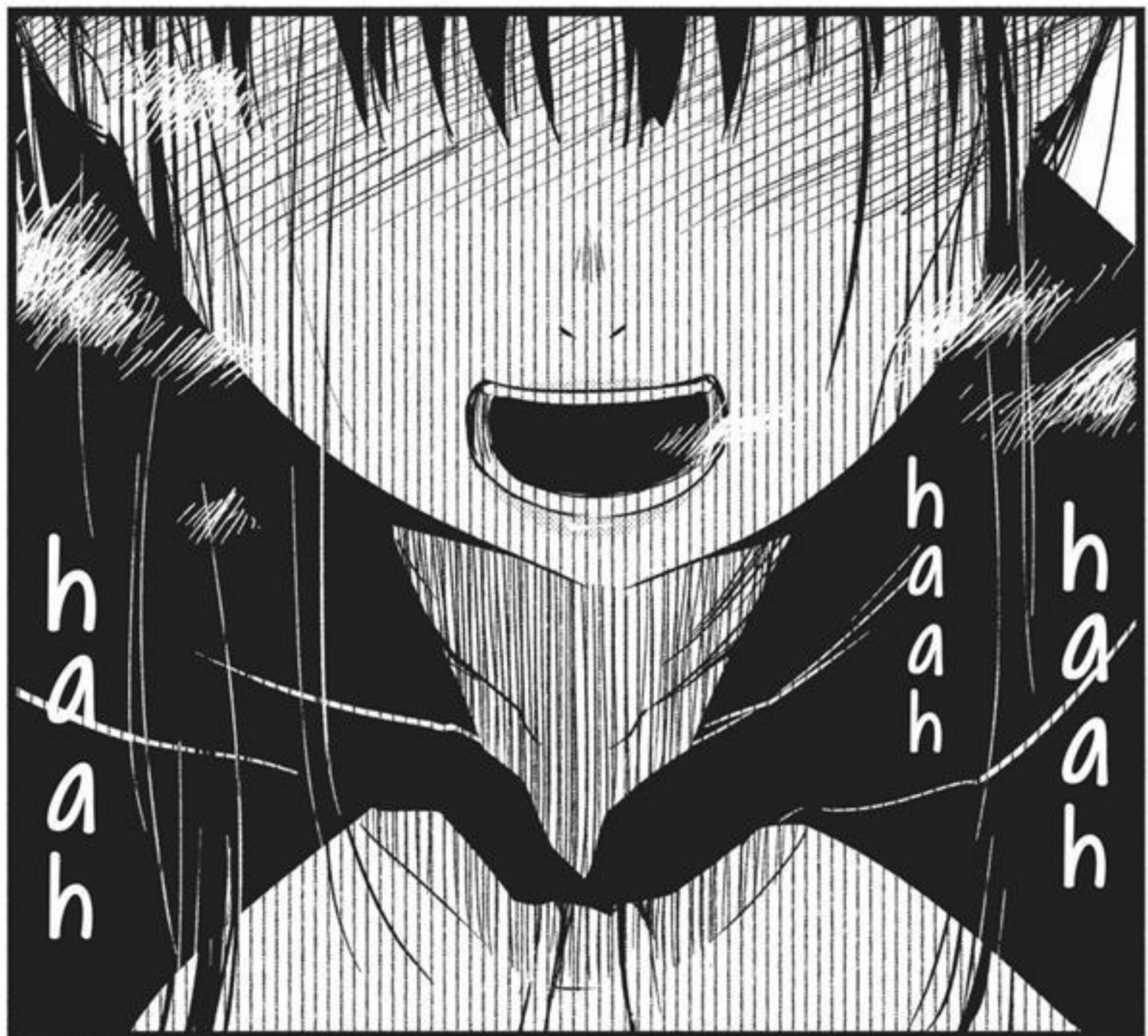
THANK YOU FOR THIS MEET!

DO YOU KNOW THAT?

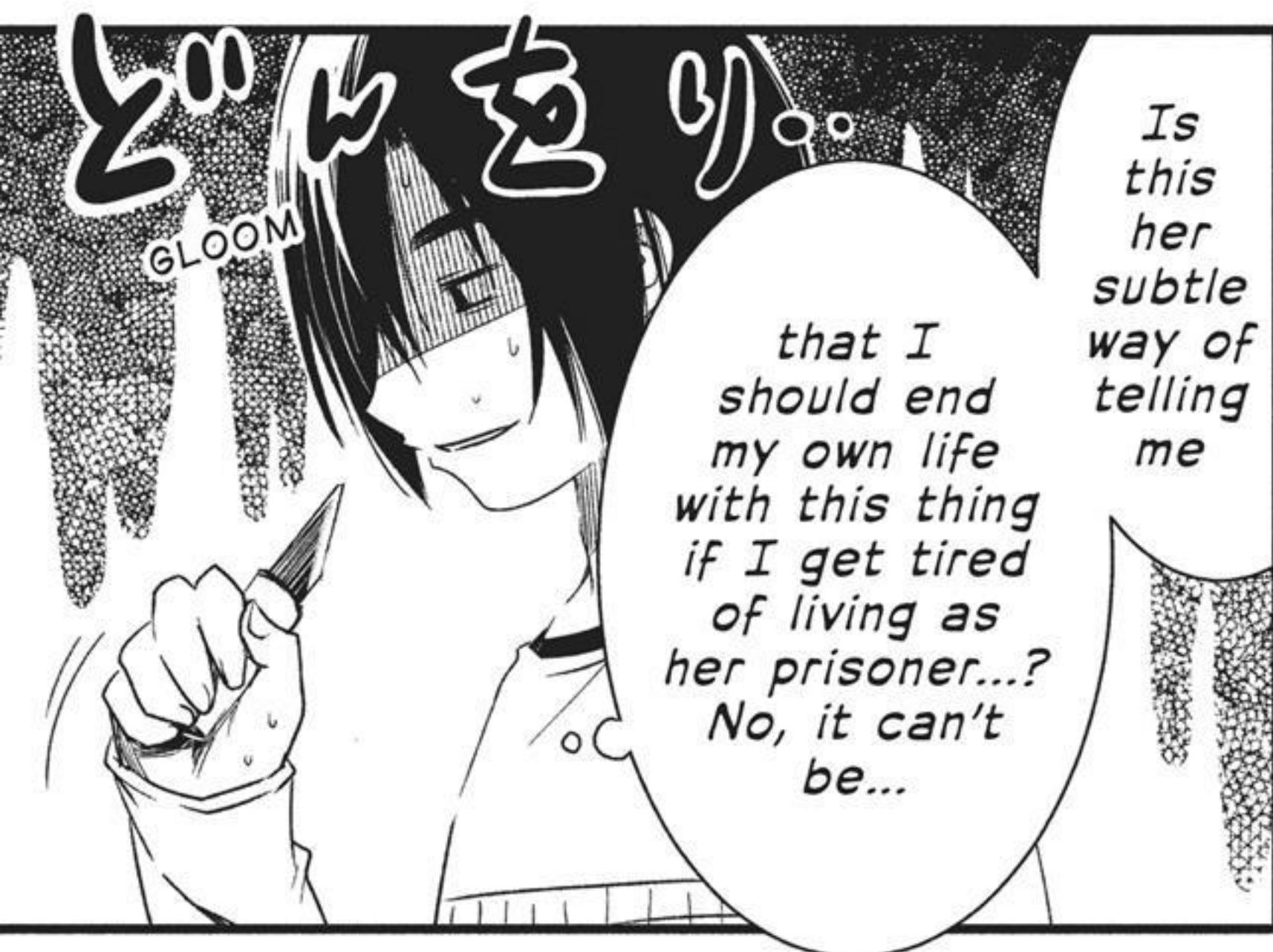
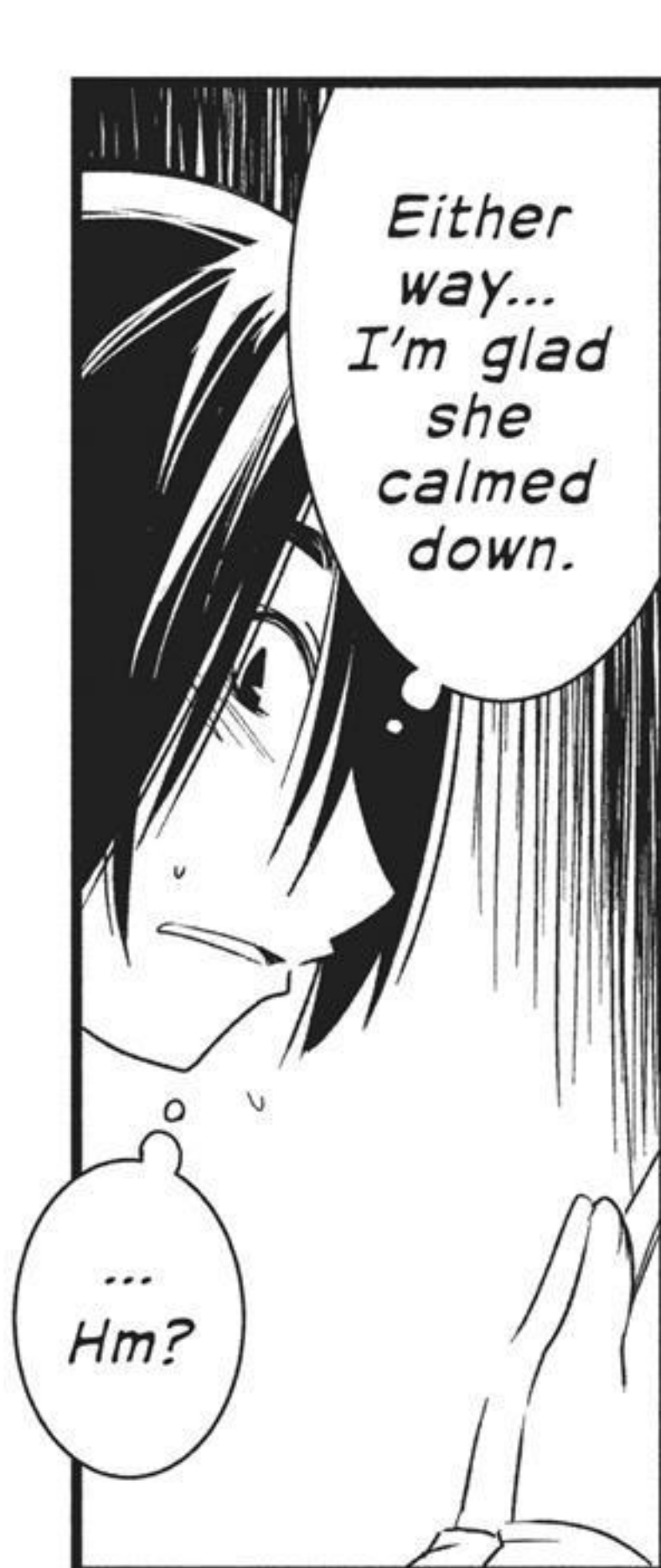




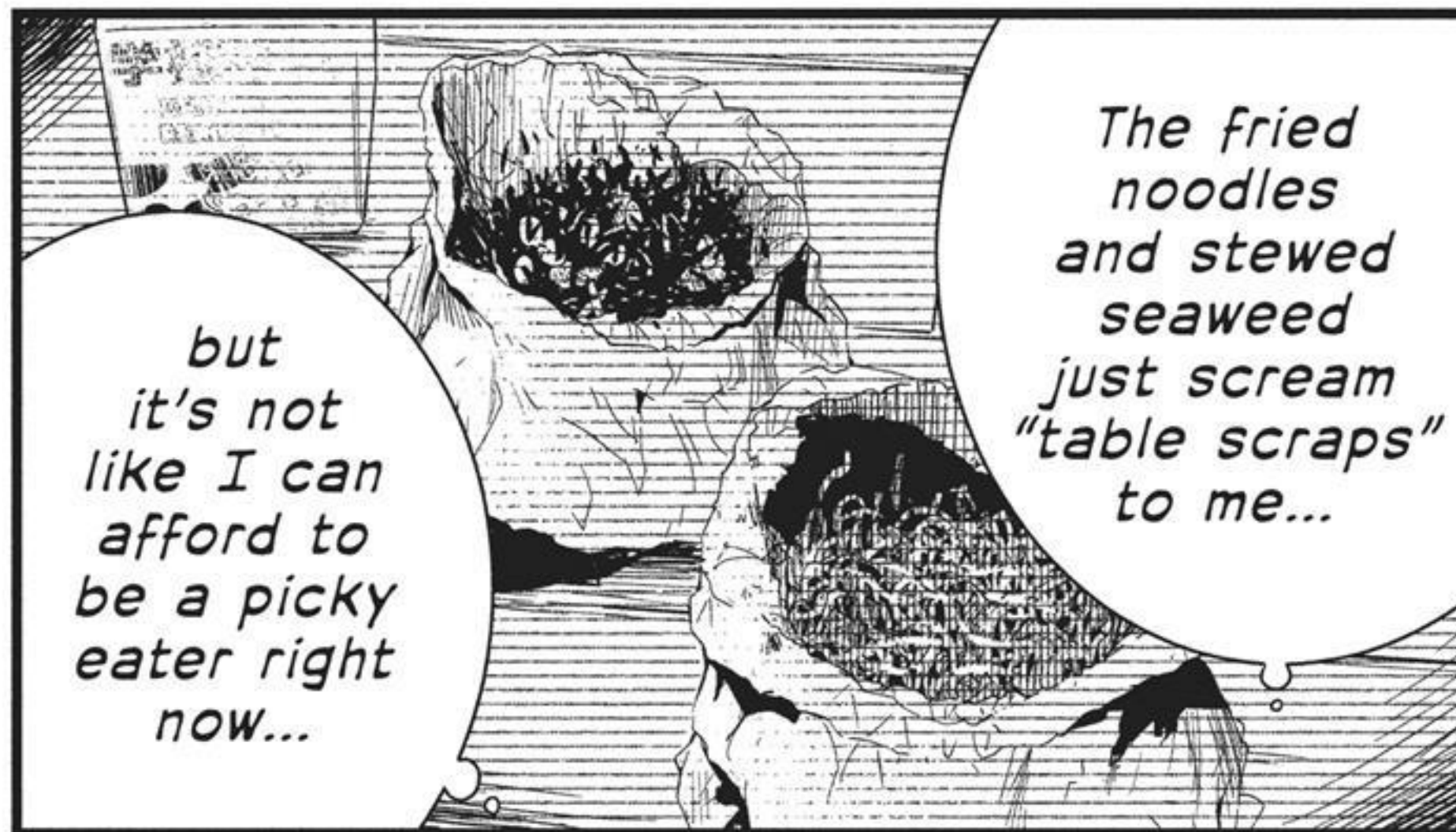














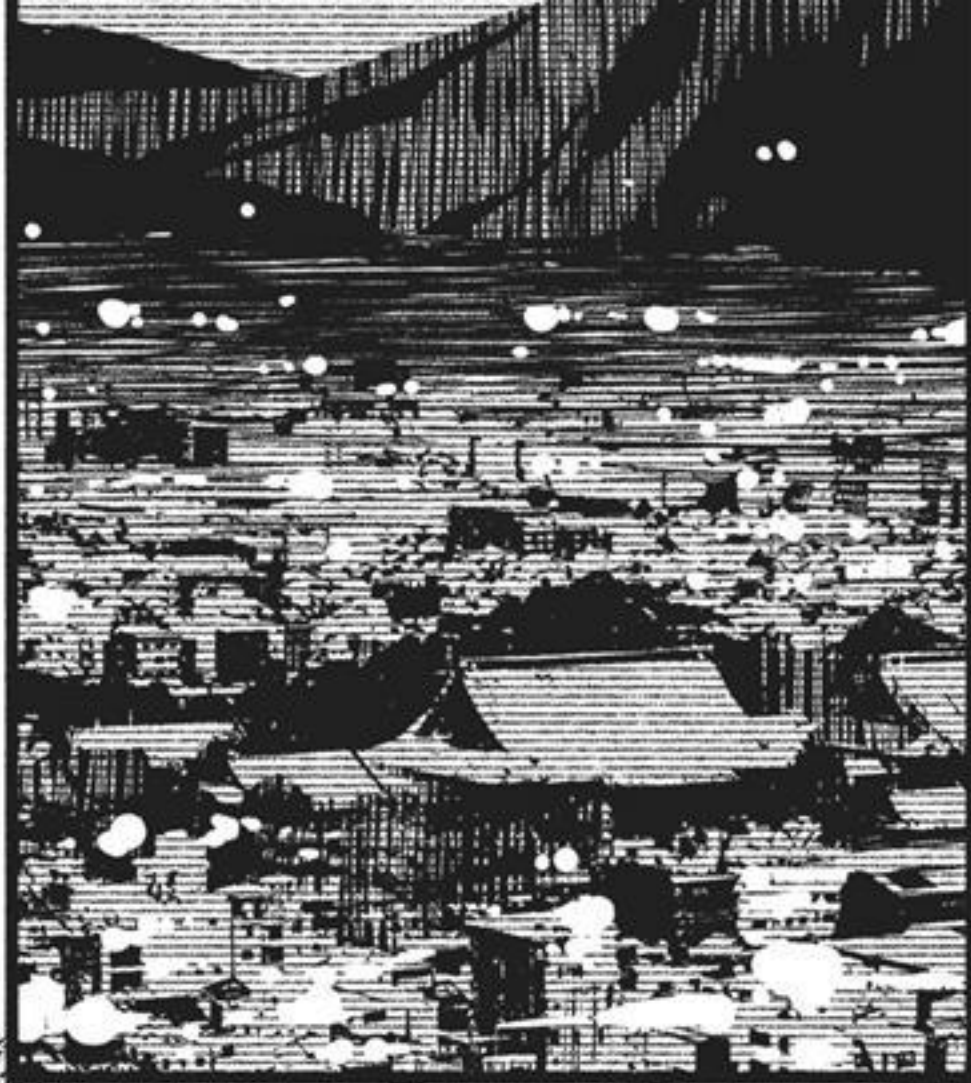


*I was astonished  
by how weak my  
willpower was.*

*In fact, it wasn't  
enough for a single  
meal...*

I was no  
match for  
my empty  
stomach...





Thank  
you for  
the  
food.

...



But I'd  
lost my  
nerve  
once  
again.

I was  
going to  
call the  
police.

I had  
resolved to  
wait the day  
out, and if her  
parents still  
hadn't come  
back,





I was  
genuinely  
beginning  
to settle  
in.

There in the  
closet where  
I'd been  
imprisoned,



There's a  
possibility

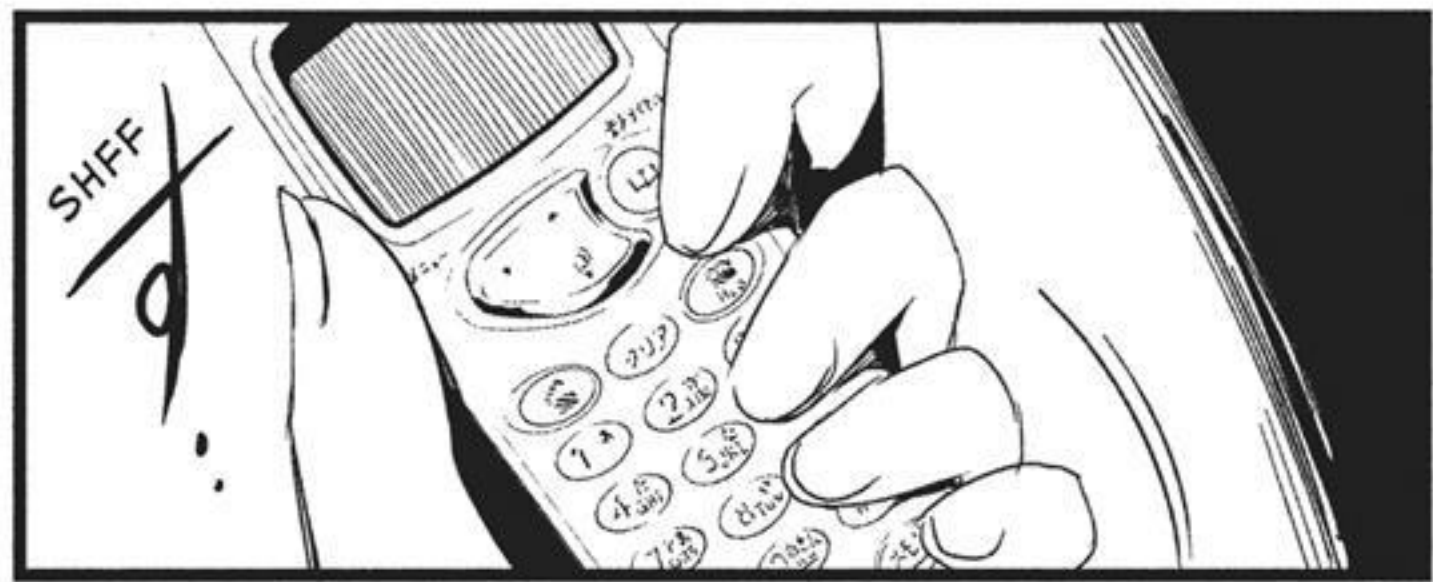
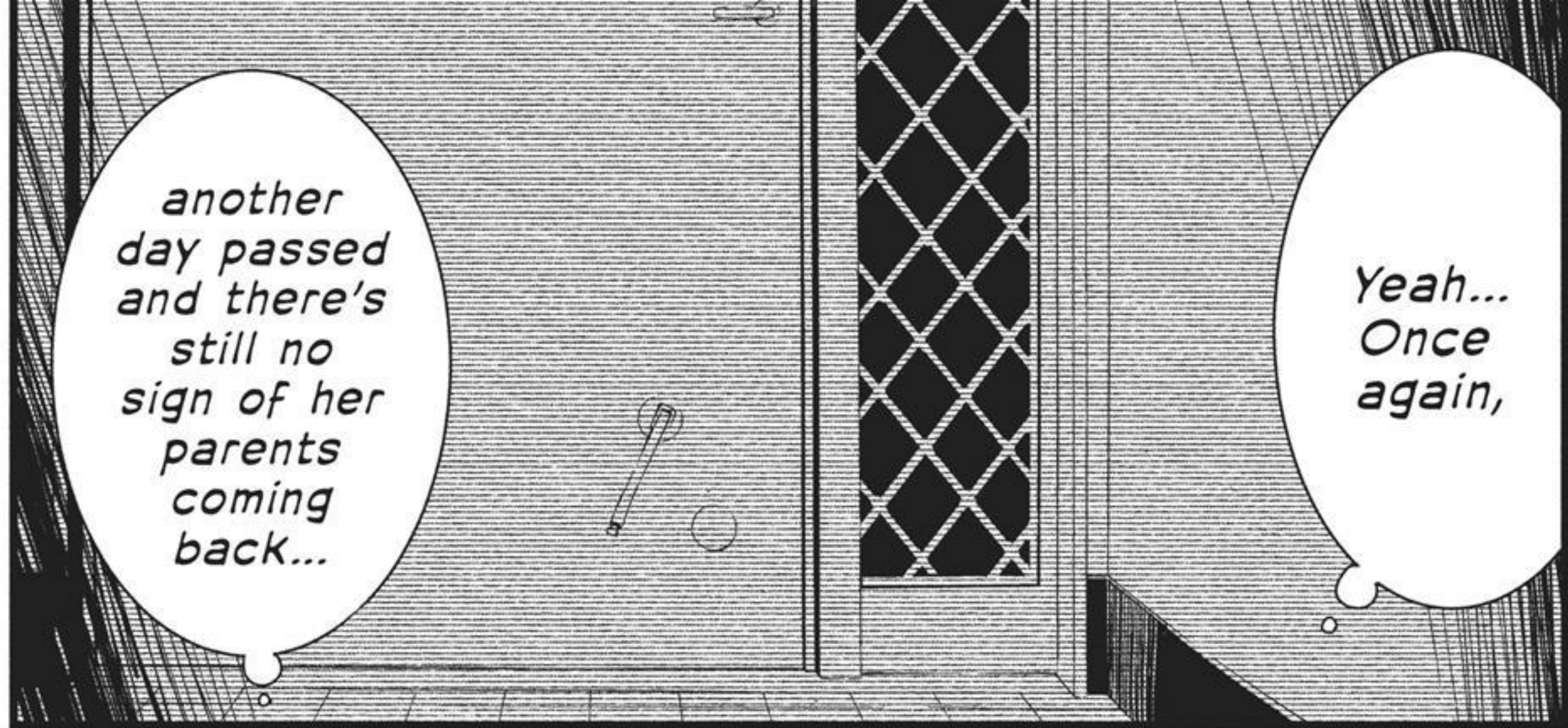


I'm sure  
reading this  
makes you  
want to yell  
at me to  
hurry up  
and run  
away from  
there.

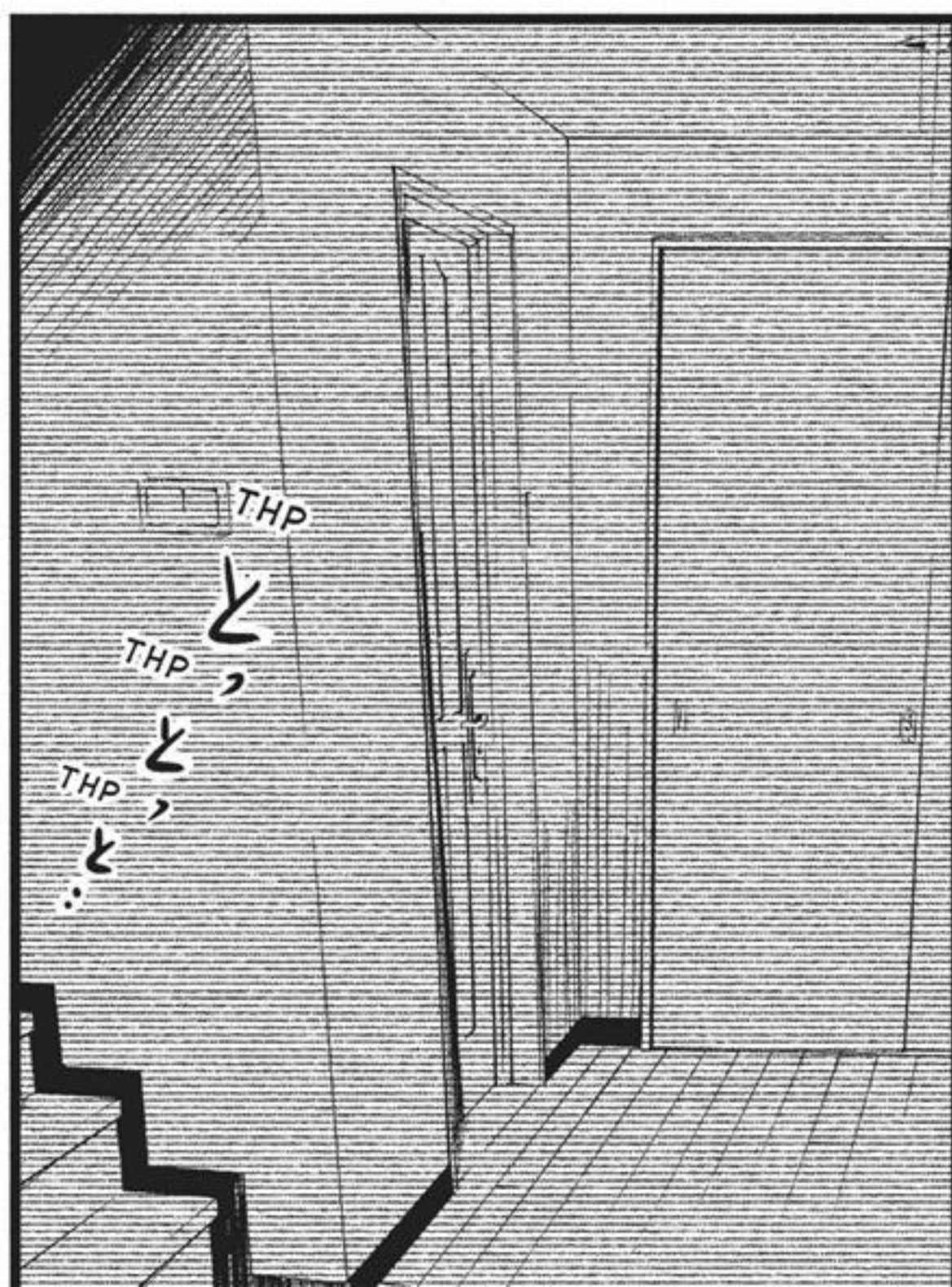
what is  
known as  
Stockholm  
syndrome  
by then.

that  
I had  
started  
to feel

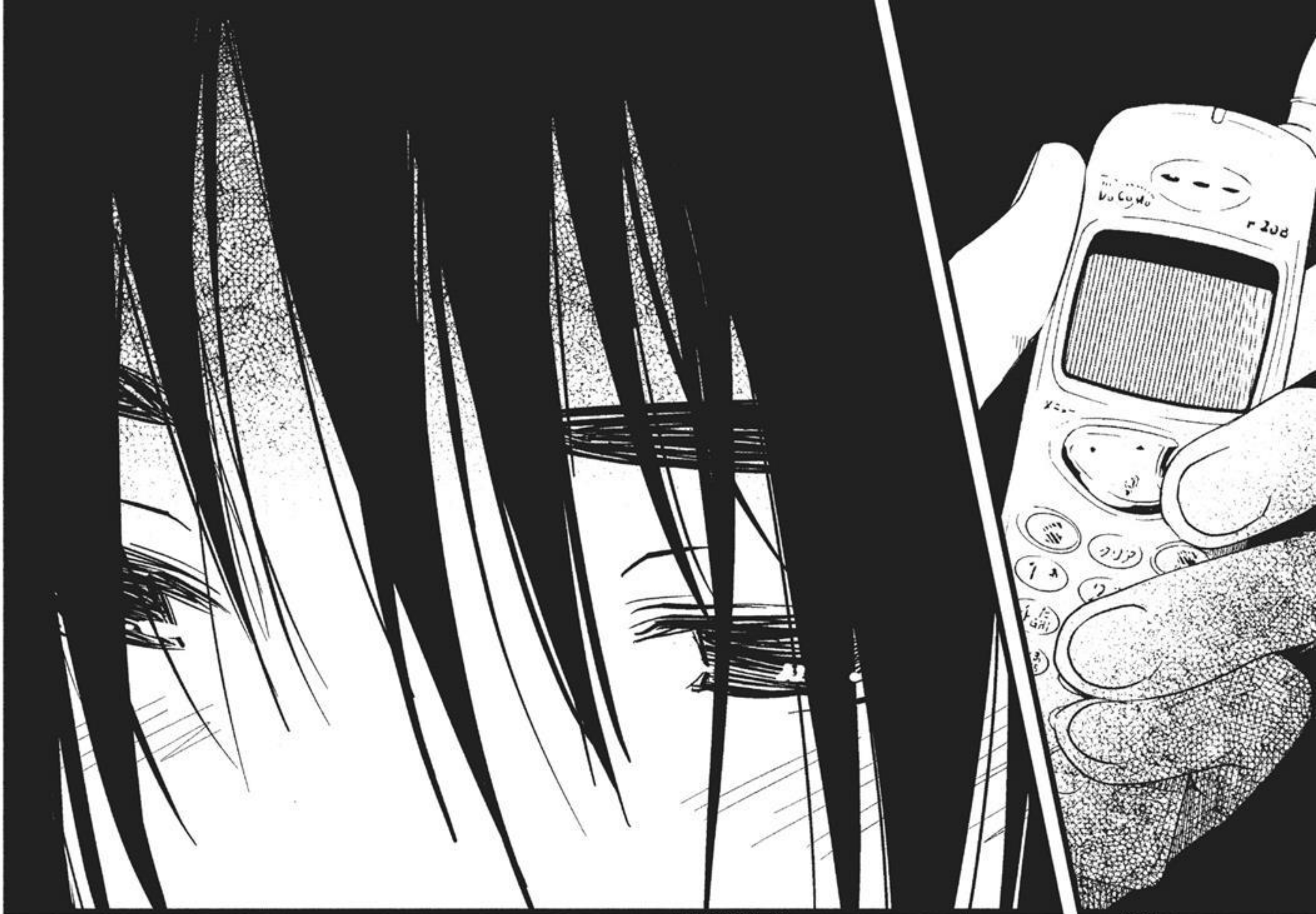












I wouldn't  
insist that  
this was the  
one and only  
reason,

and I  
replied  
with a  
"good  
night"  
of my  
own.

She  
said  
"good  
night"  
to me,





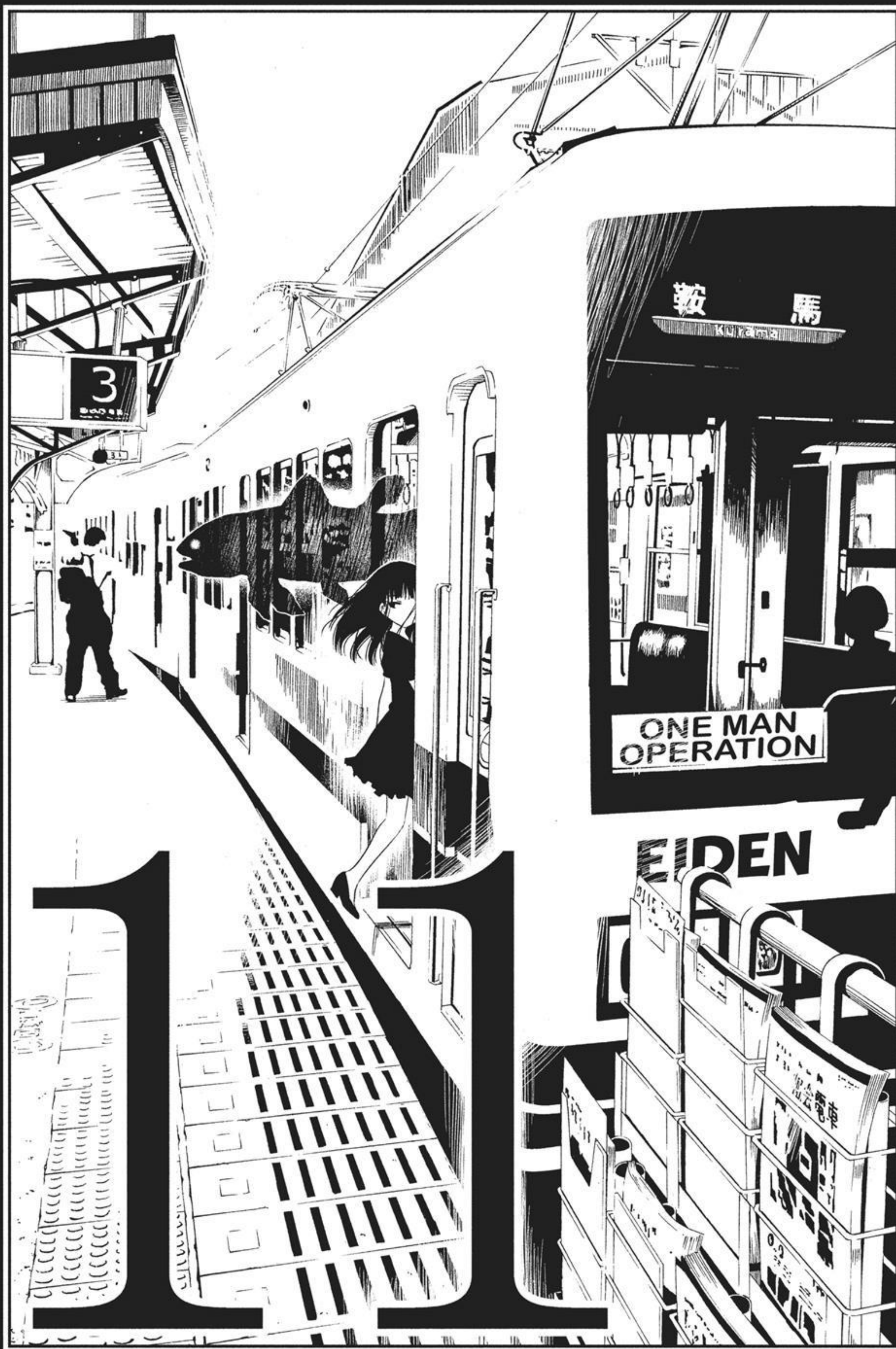
but after  
I put my  
cell phone  
back in my  
pocket,

I  
never  
took  
it out  
again.







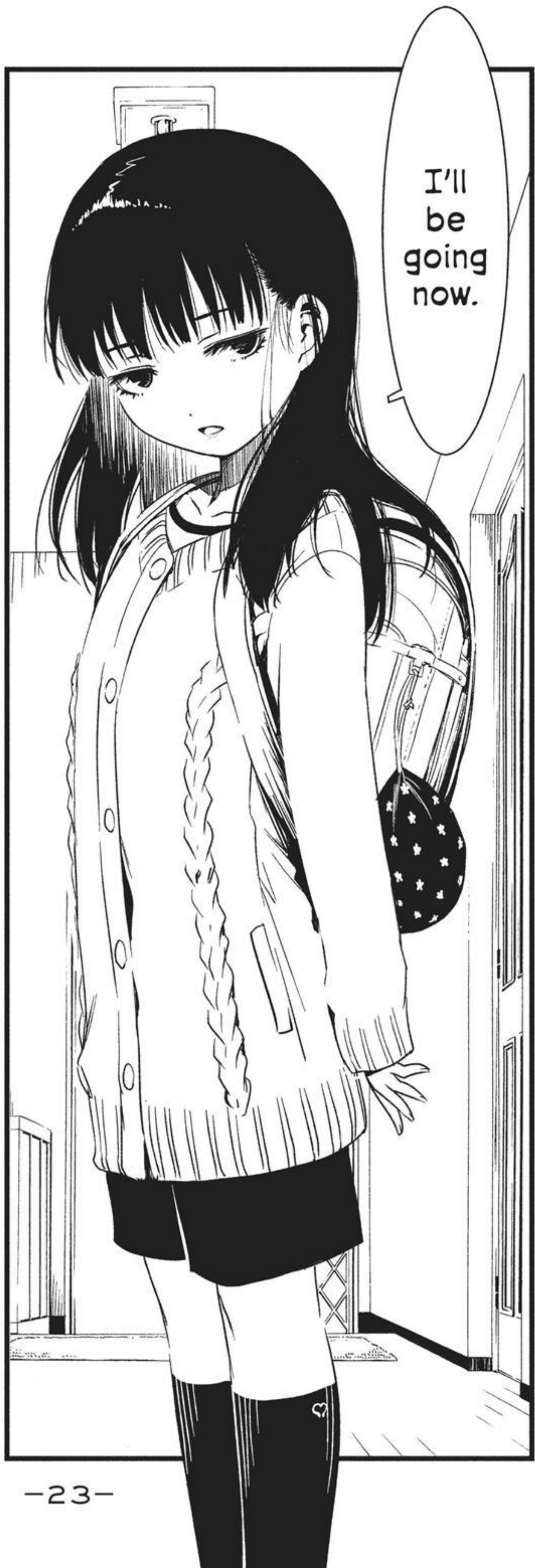




# Day 3 of Imprisonment



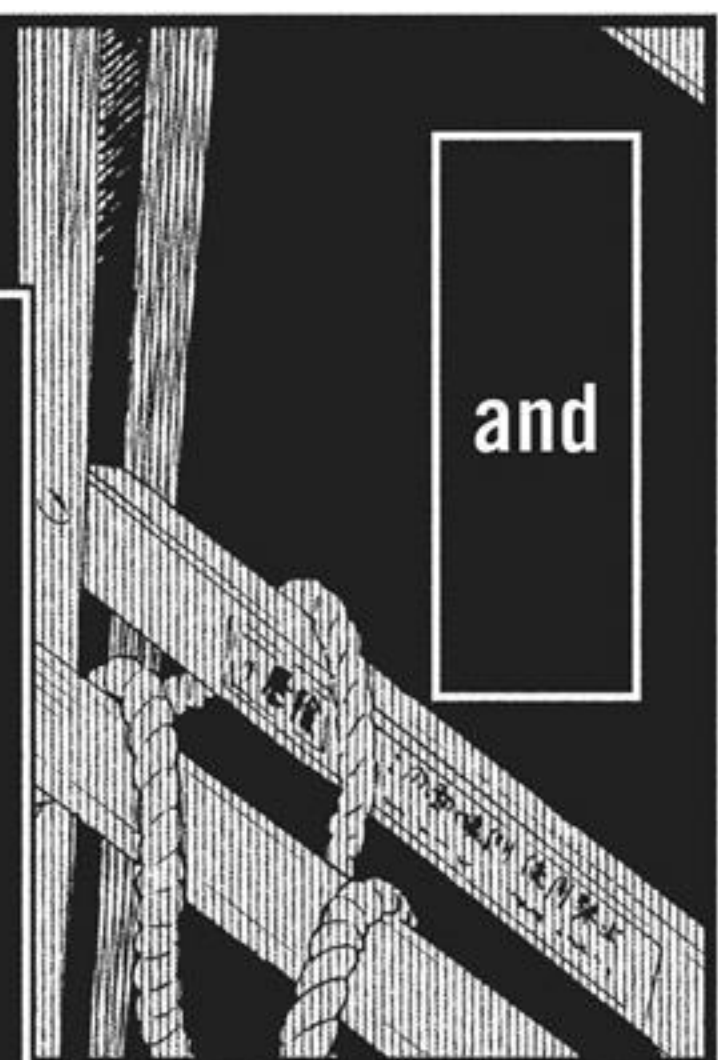








as a matter of simple necessity...







**THE  
TOILET  
...!!**

I  
NEED  
TO  
USE

h  
a  
a  
h  
o

h  
a  
a  
h  
:

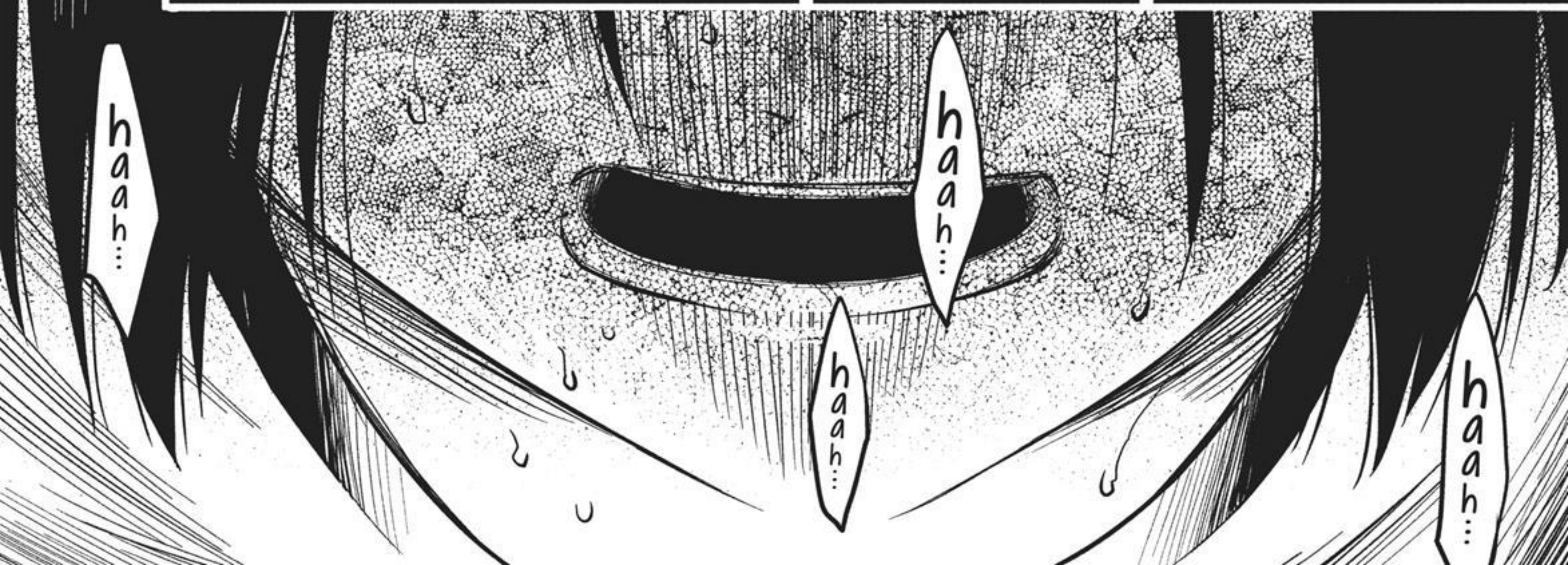
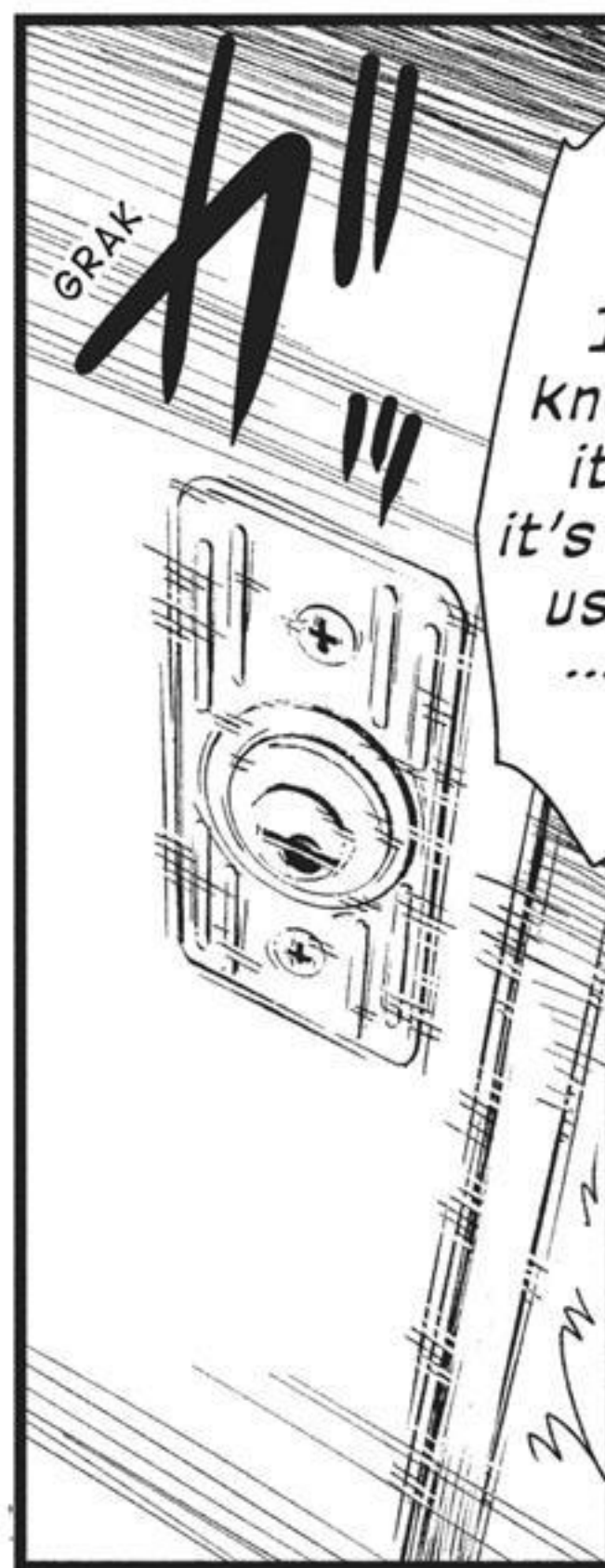
# h a a h



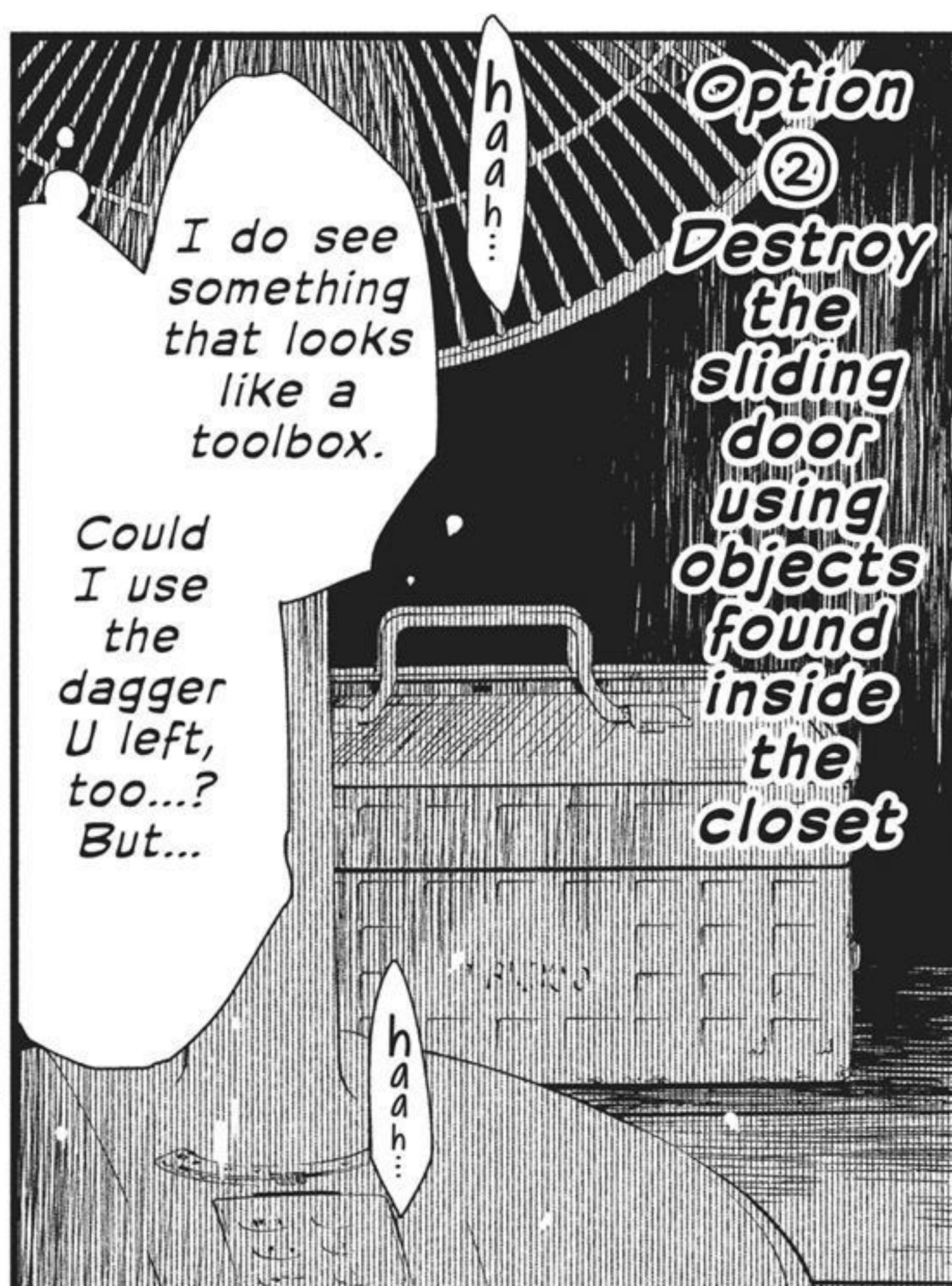
**RUMBLE**

**RUMBLE**

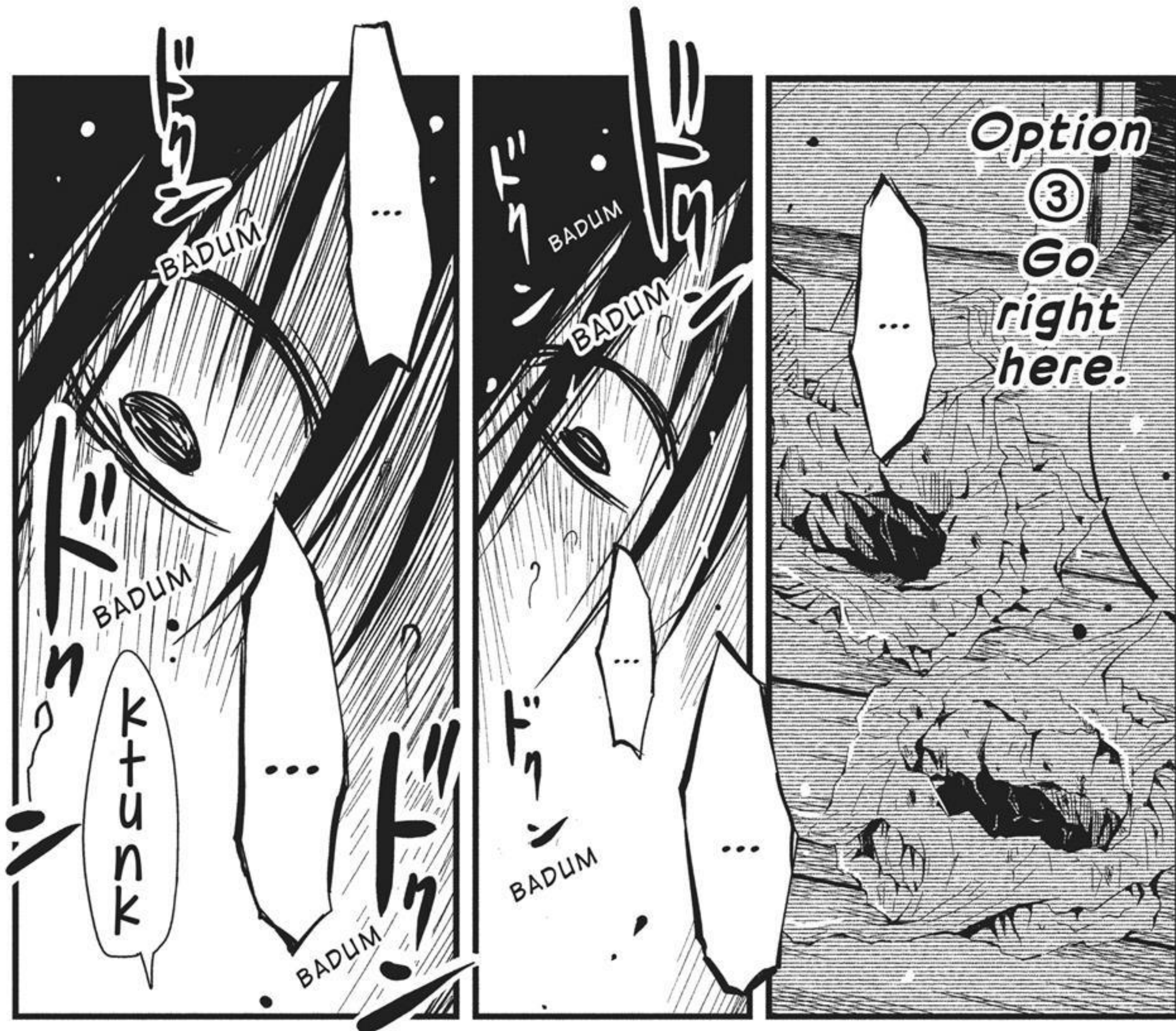
























*That  
might  
actually be  
a pretty  
nifty new  
trick to  
use in a  
novel...*

Hoo...

*Lift  
the whole  
door up  
and take  
it off its  
rails...*





I  
escaped  
...  
Or rather,



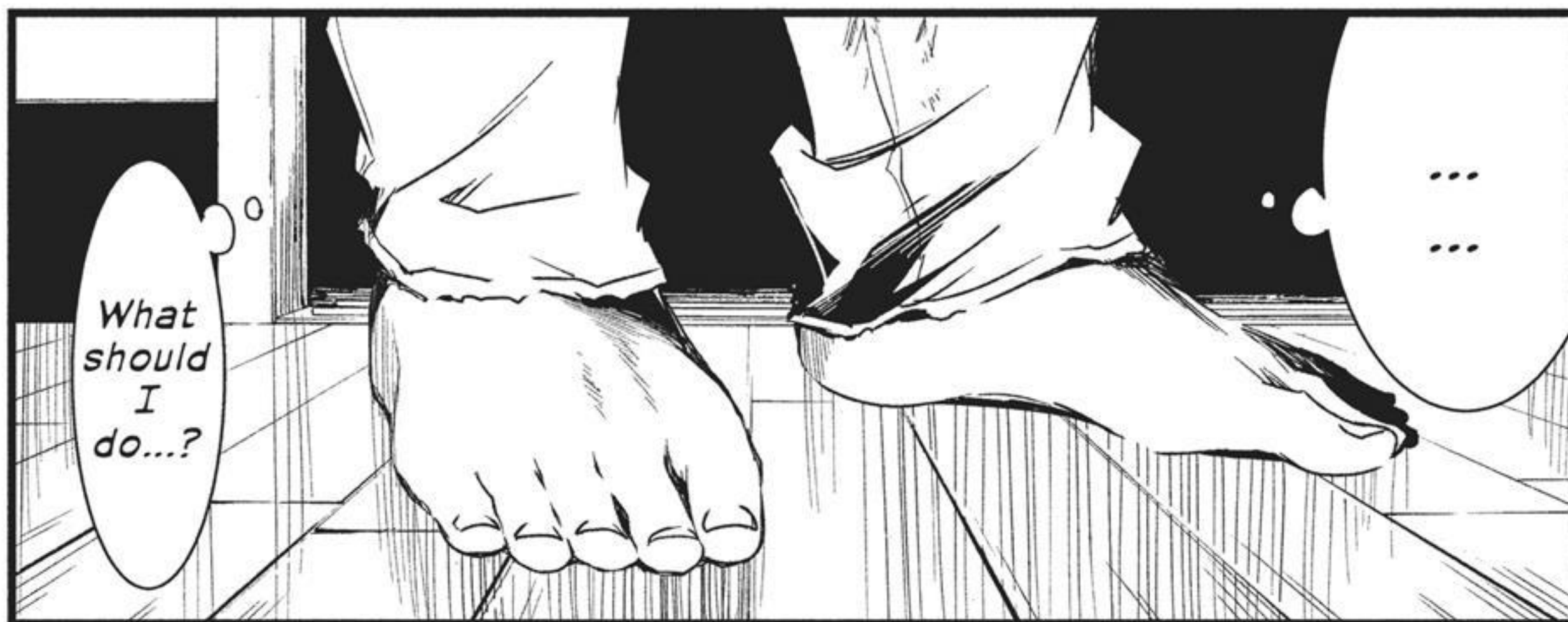
...  
Okay,  
then  
...



*I had  
managed  
to get  
myself  
out...*









**Eccentric**

**Someone Special**

**My**

**Regular  
Life**



**Follow  
your  
dreams...**

**Again**

**and**

**again**

...

**T  
a  
s  
t  
e**

**Talent**

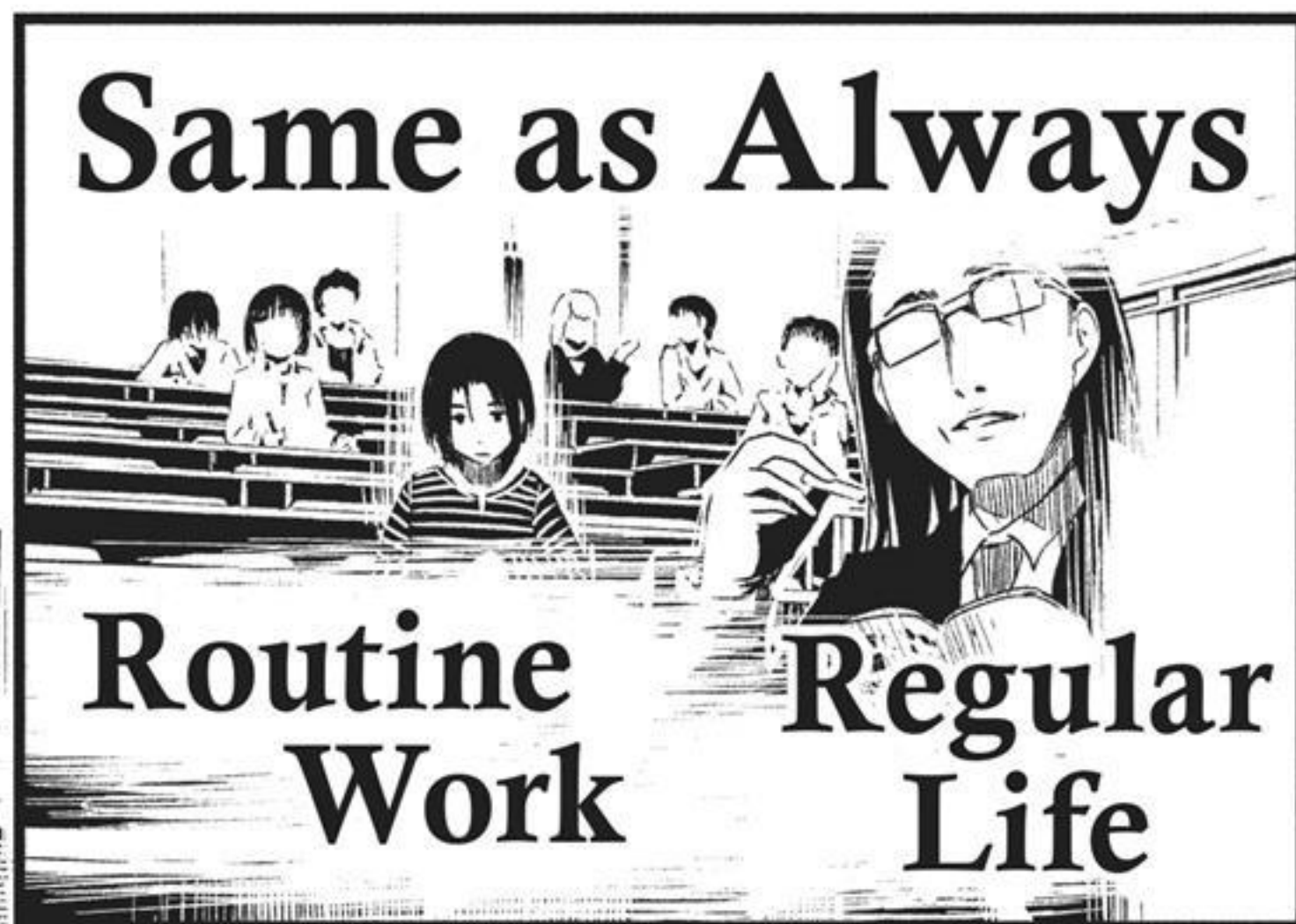
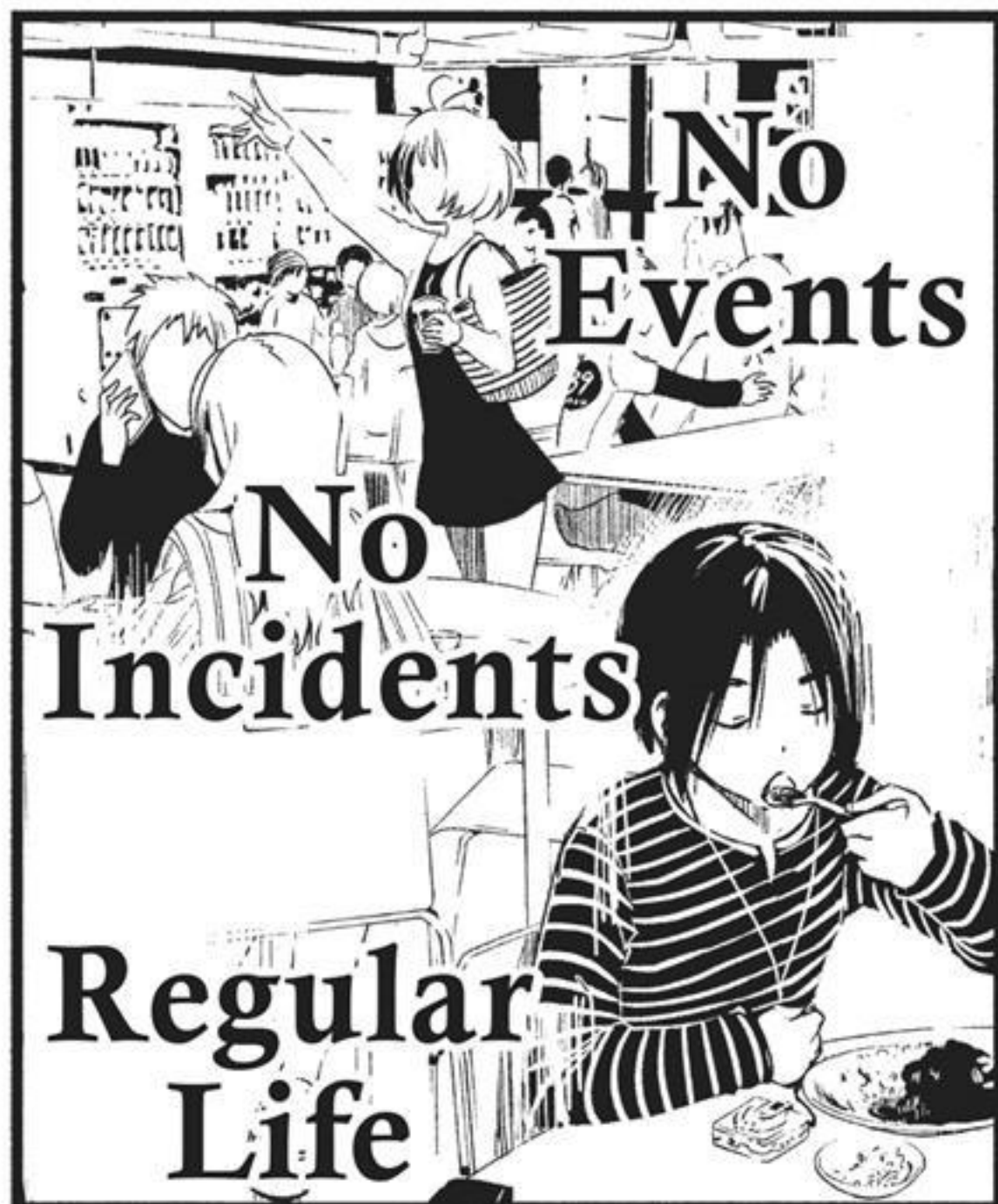
**No  
Prospects**

**Anxiety**

**Over  
and  
over**

...









where  
I  
continue  
to  
write

imitations

of

novels.













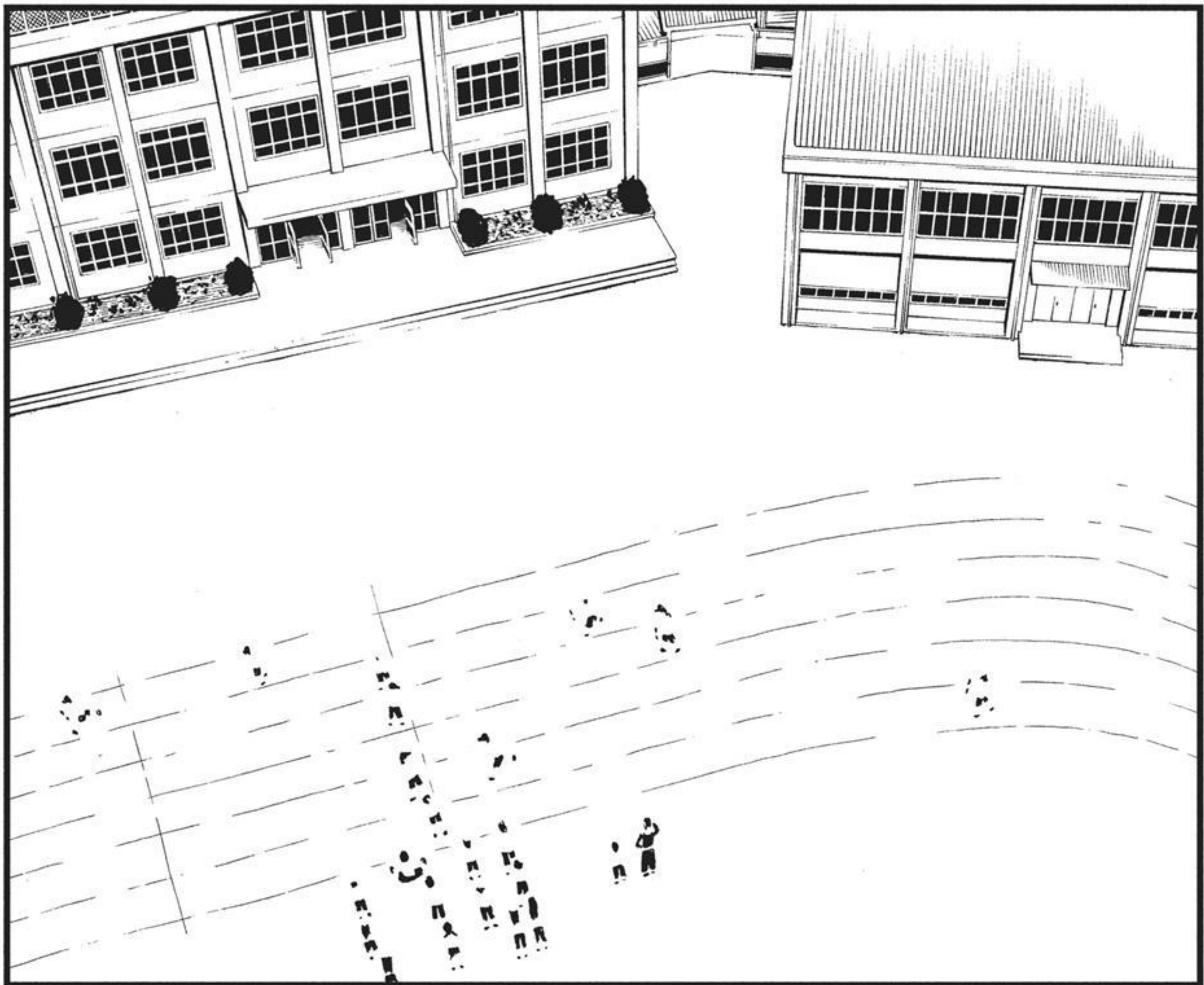
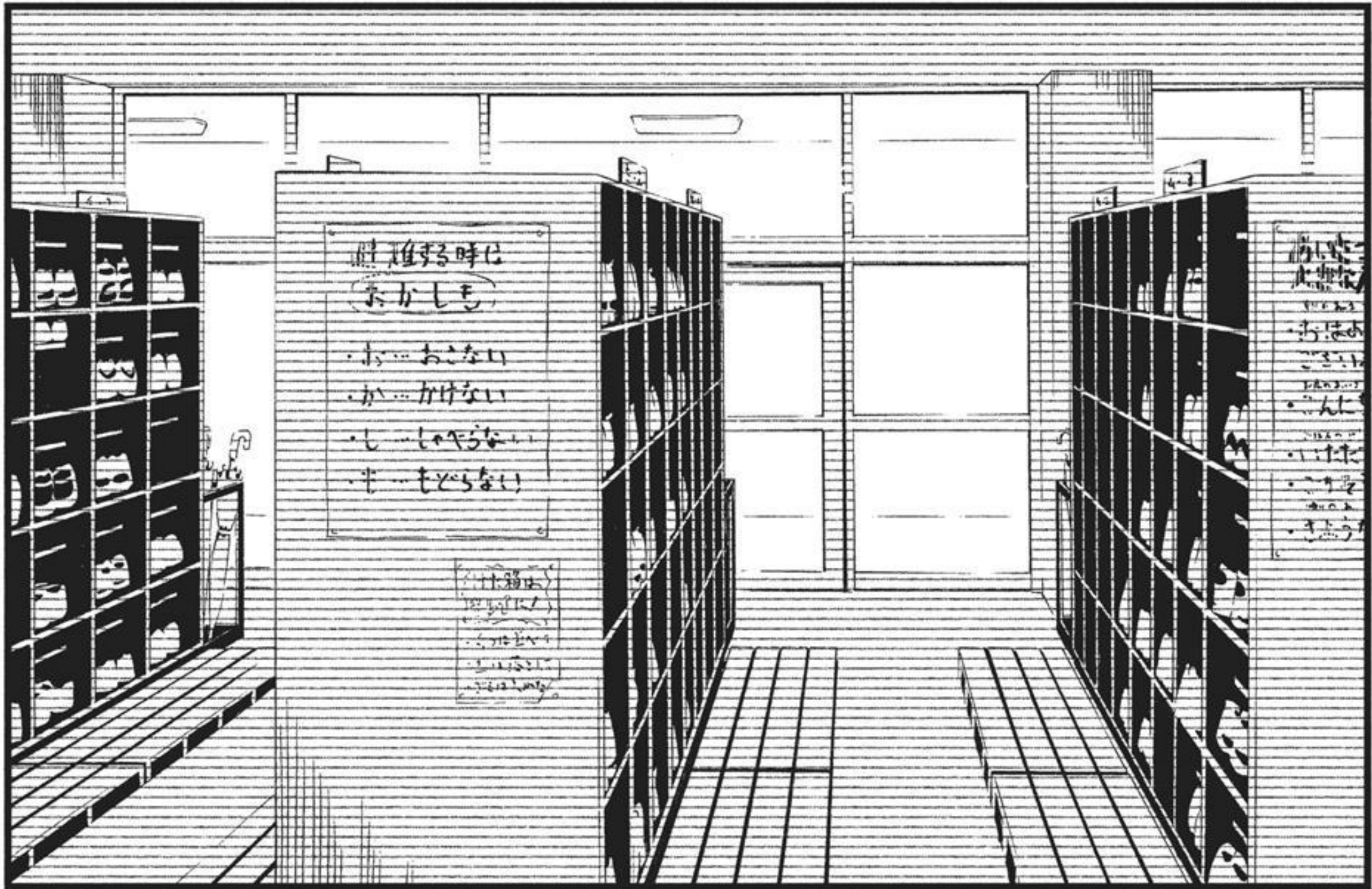








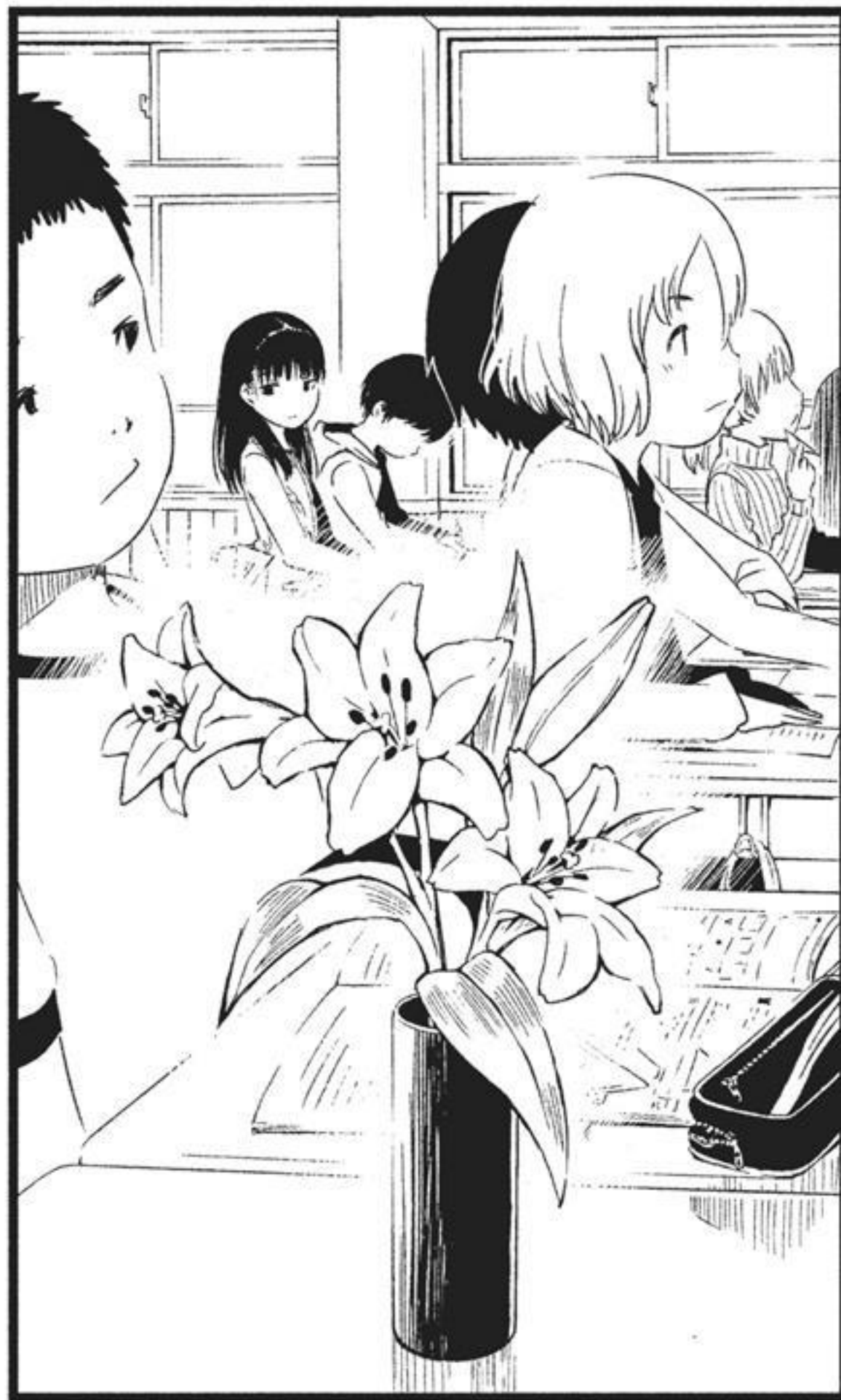








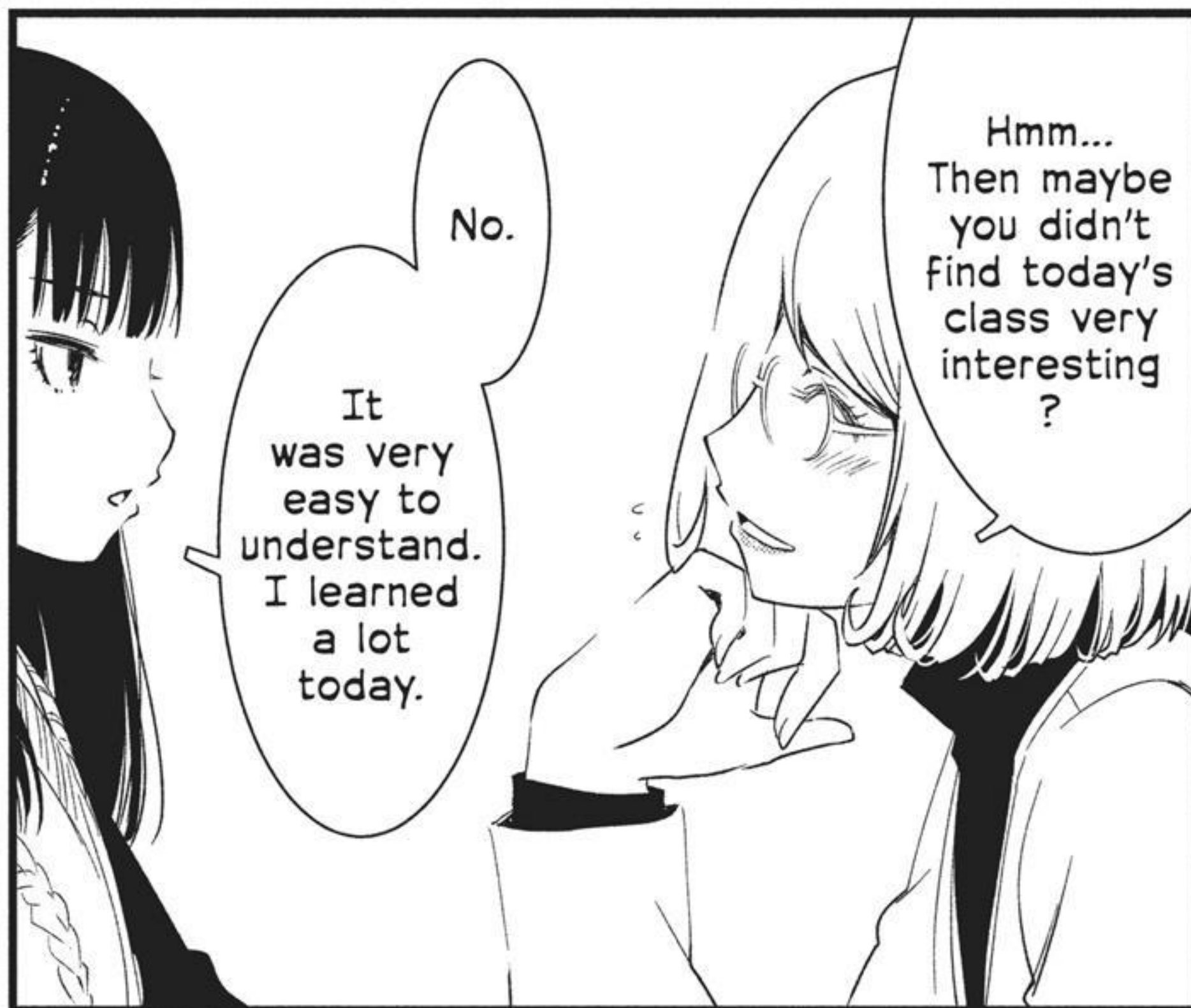
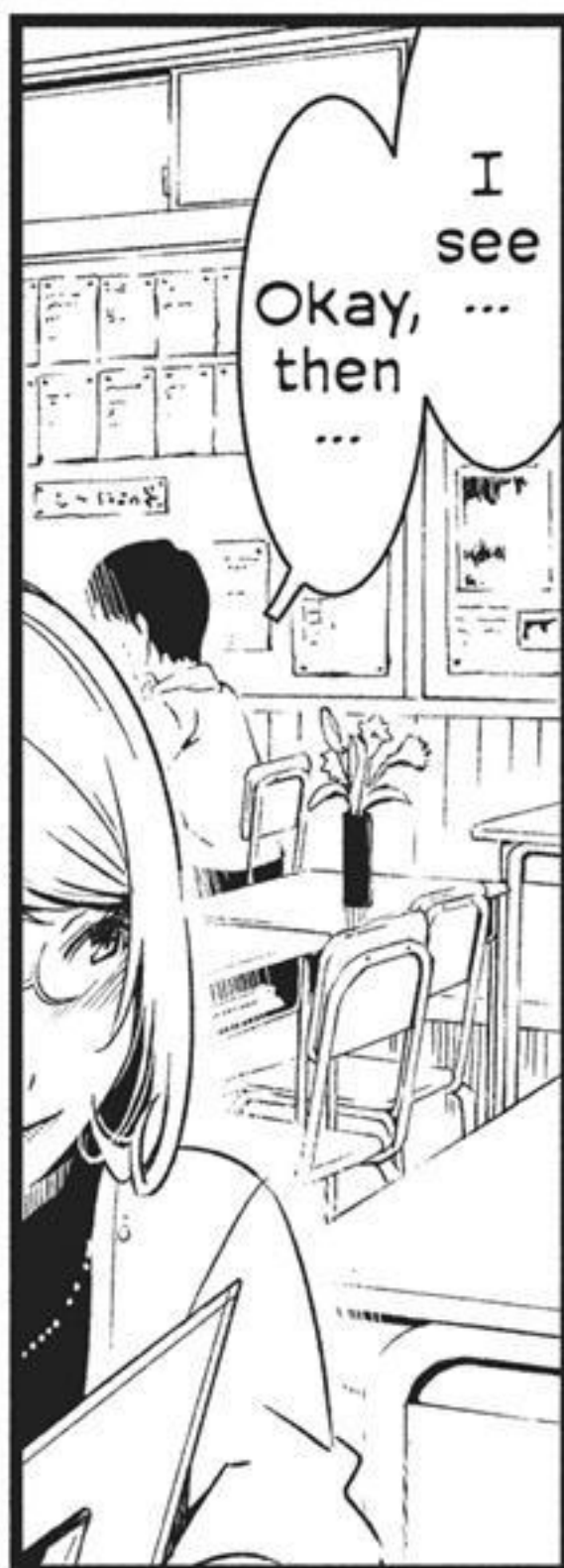
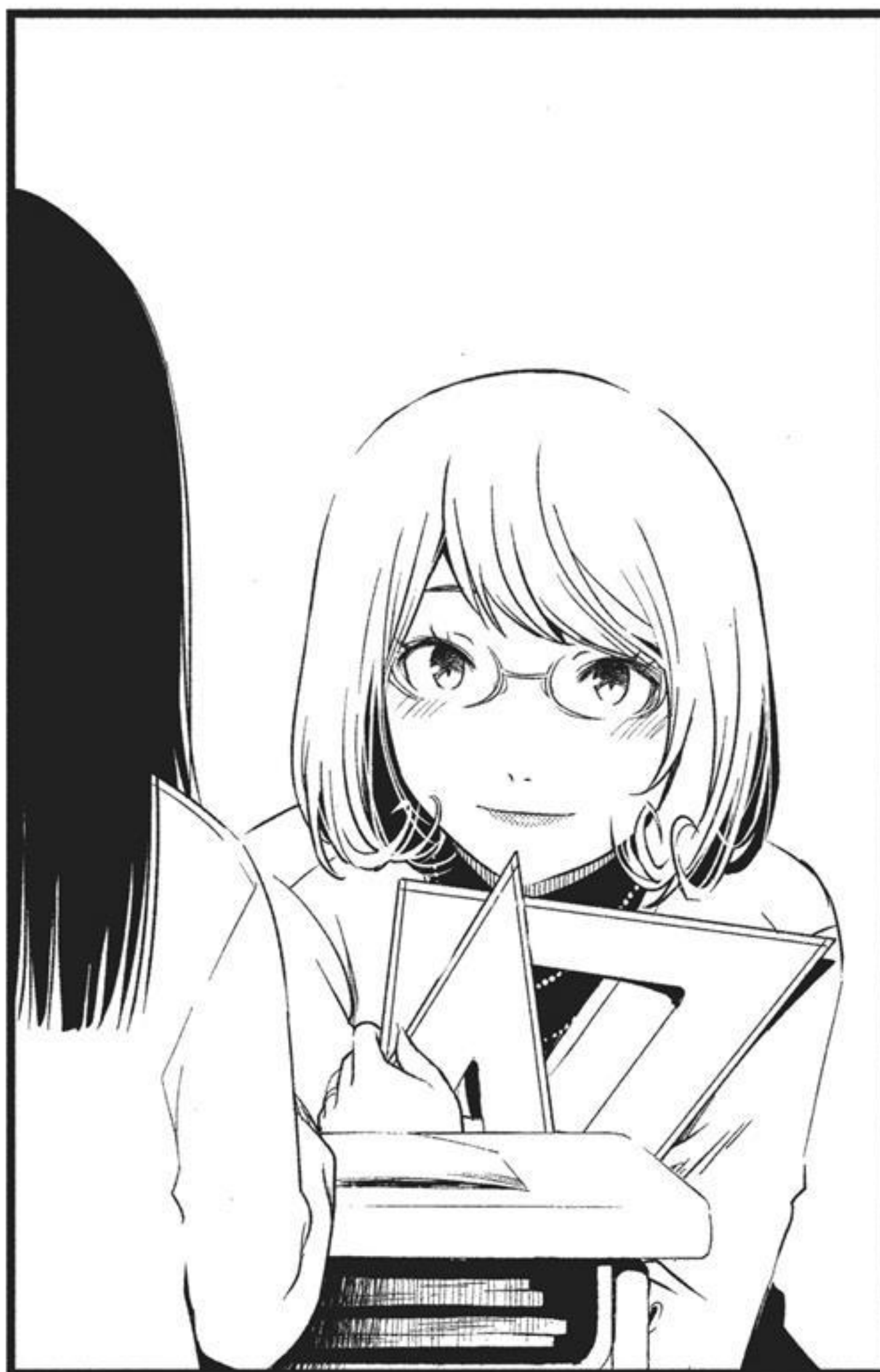




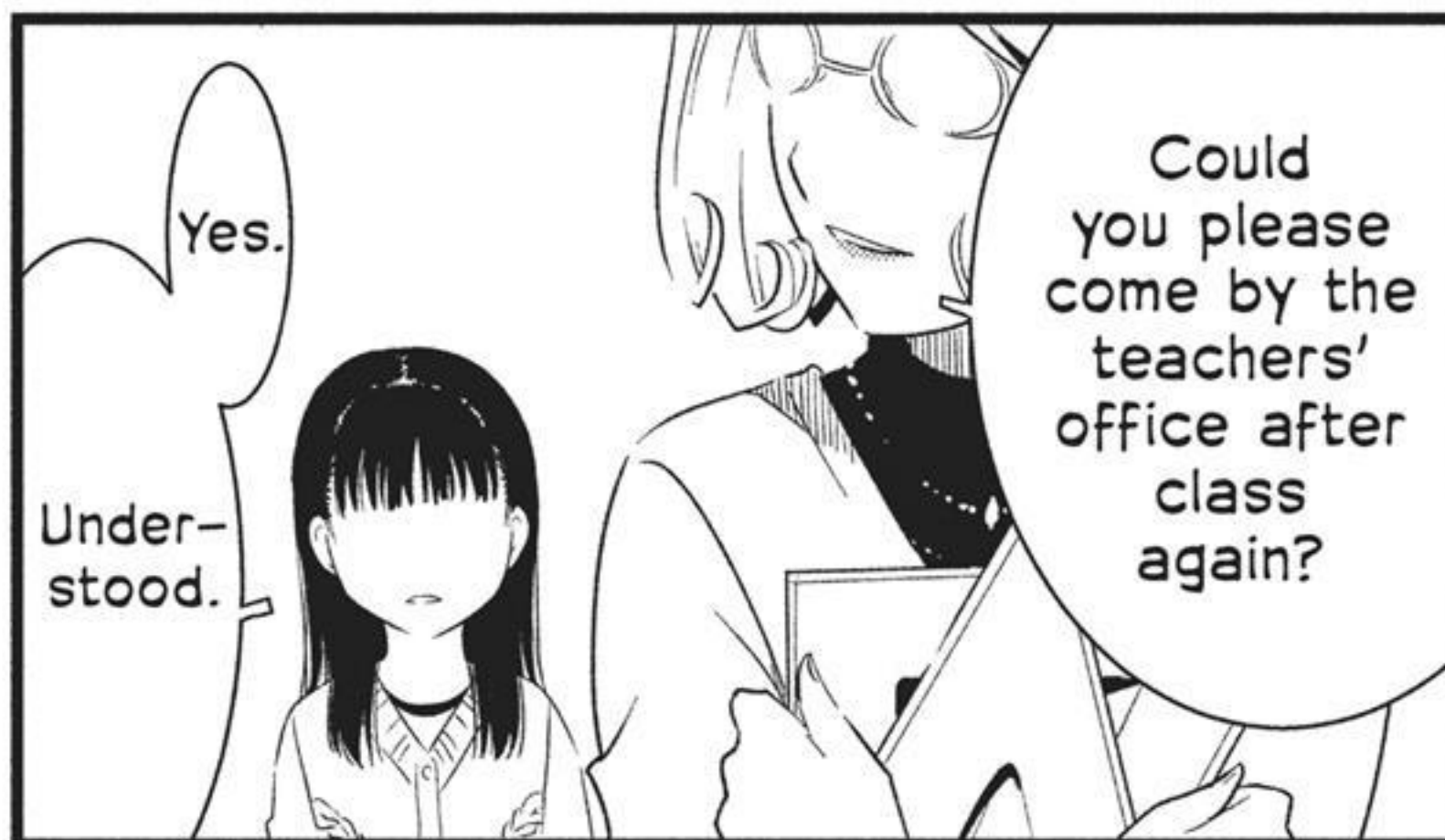




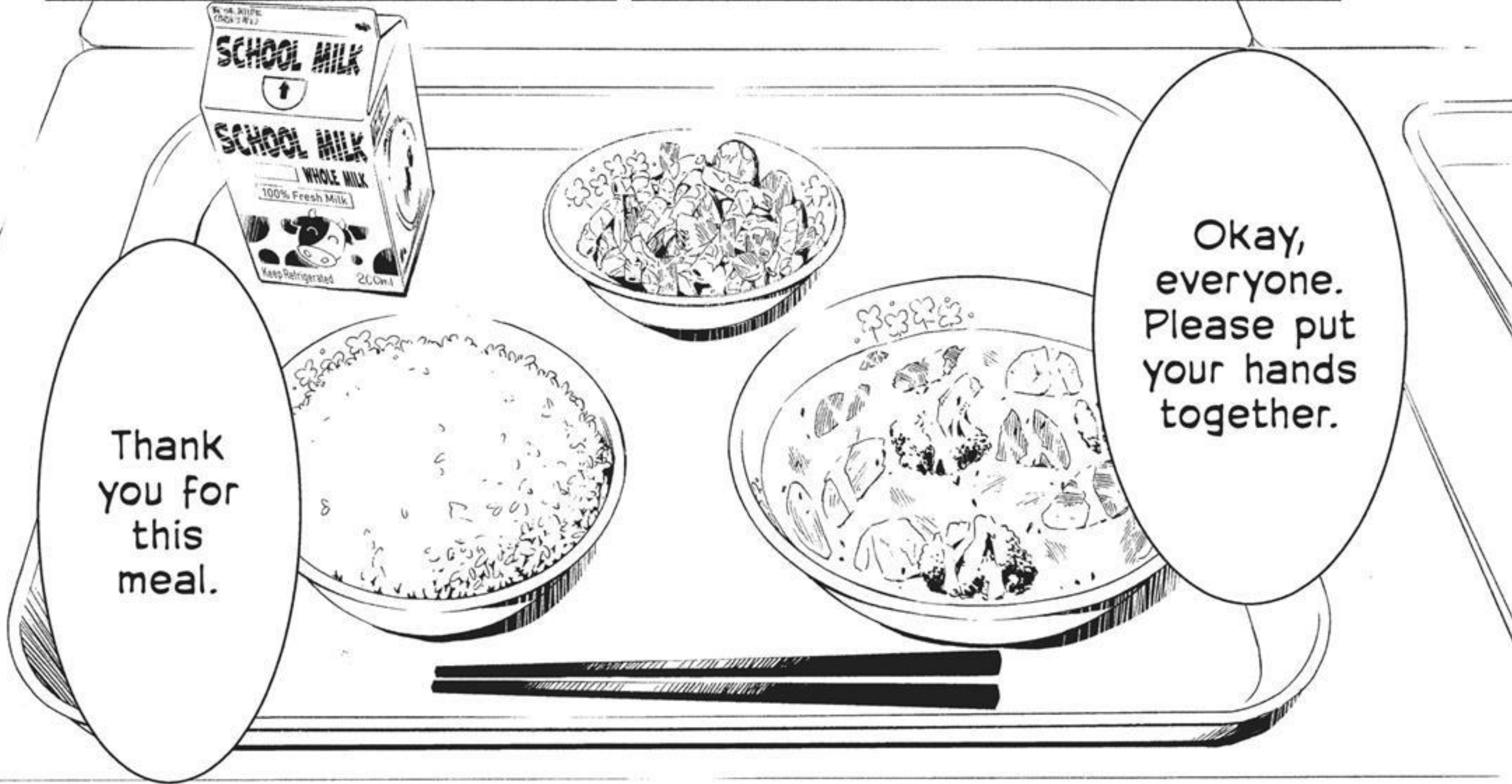
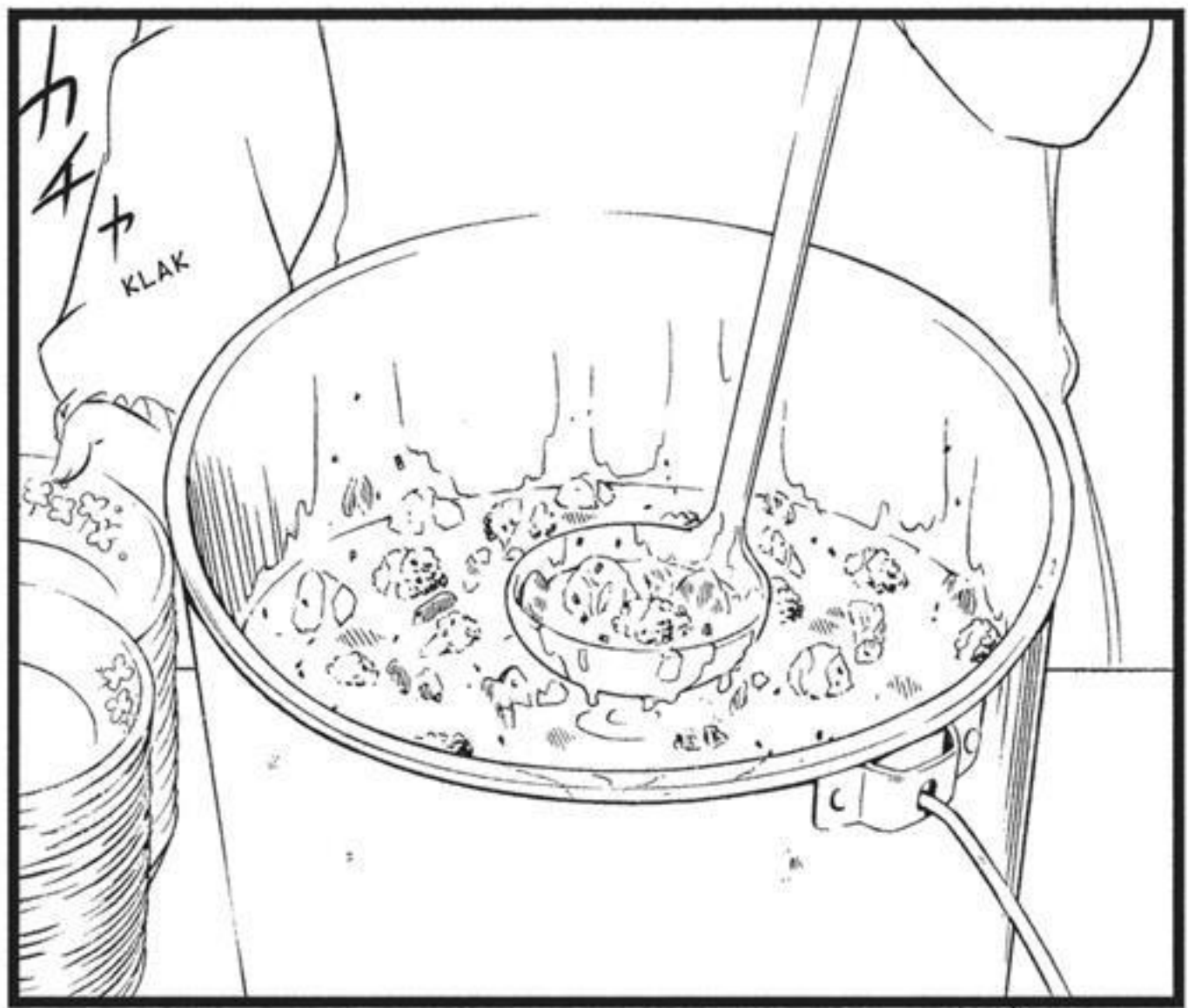










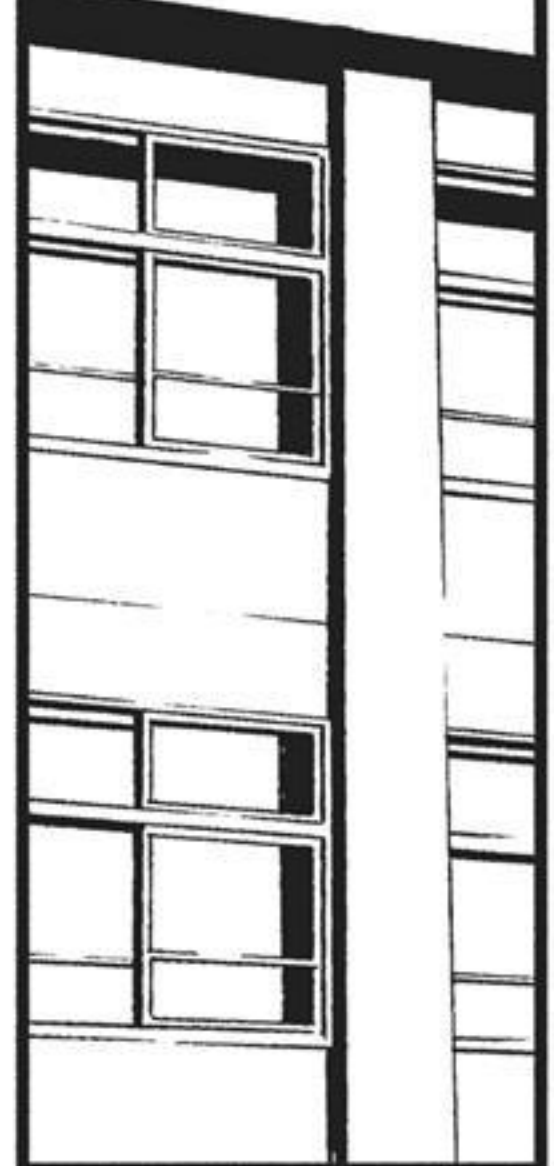
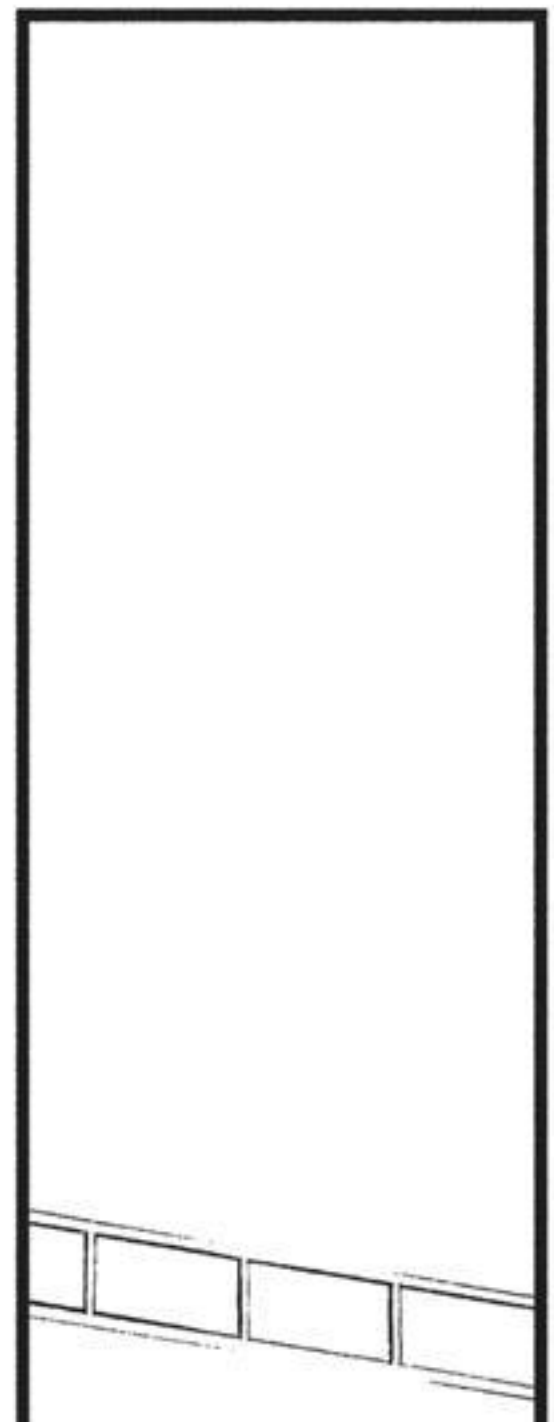


for  
this  
meal

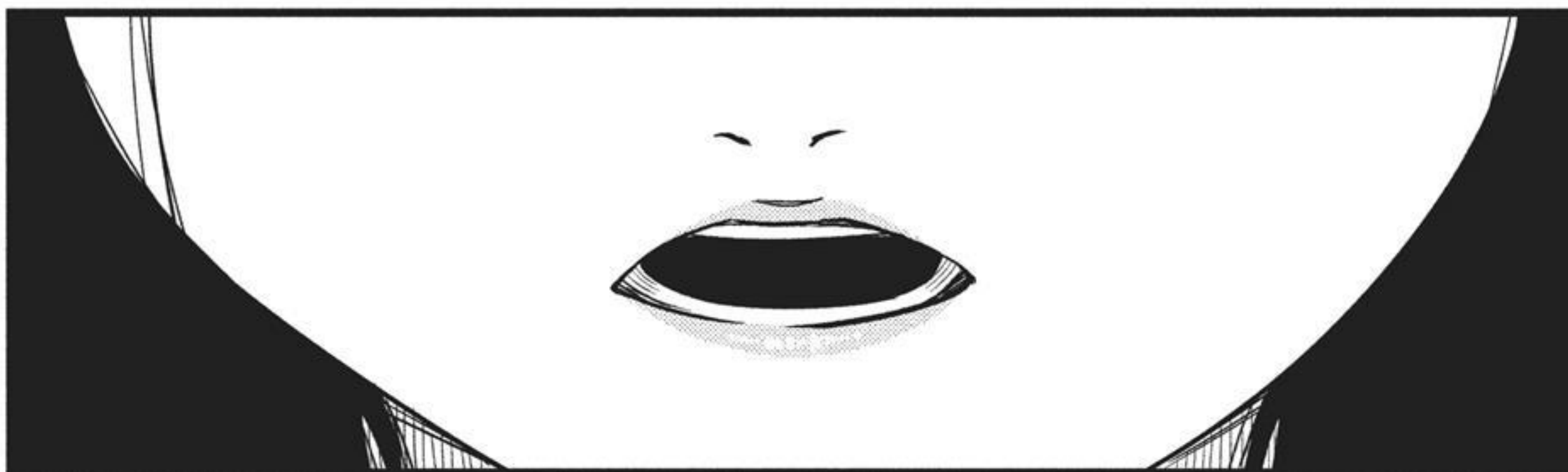


Thank  
you





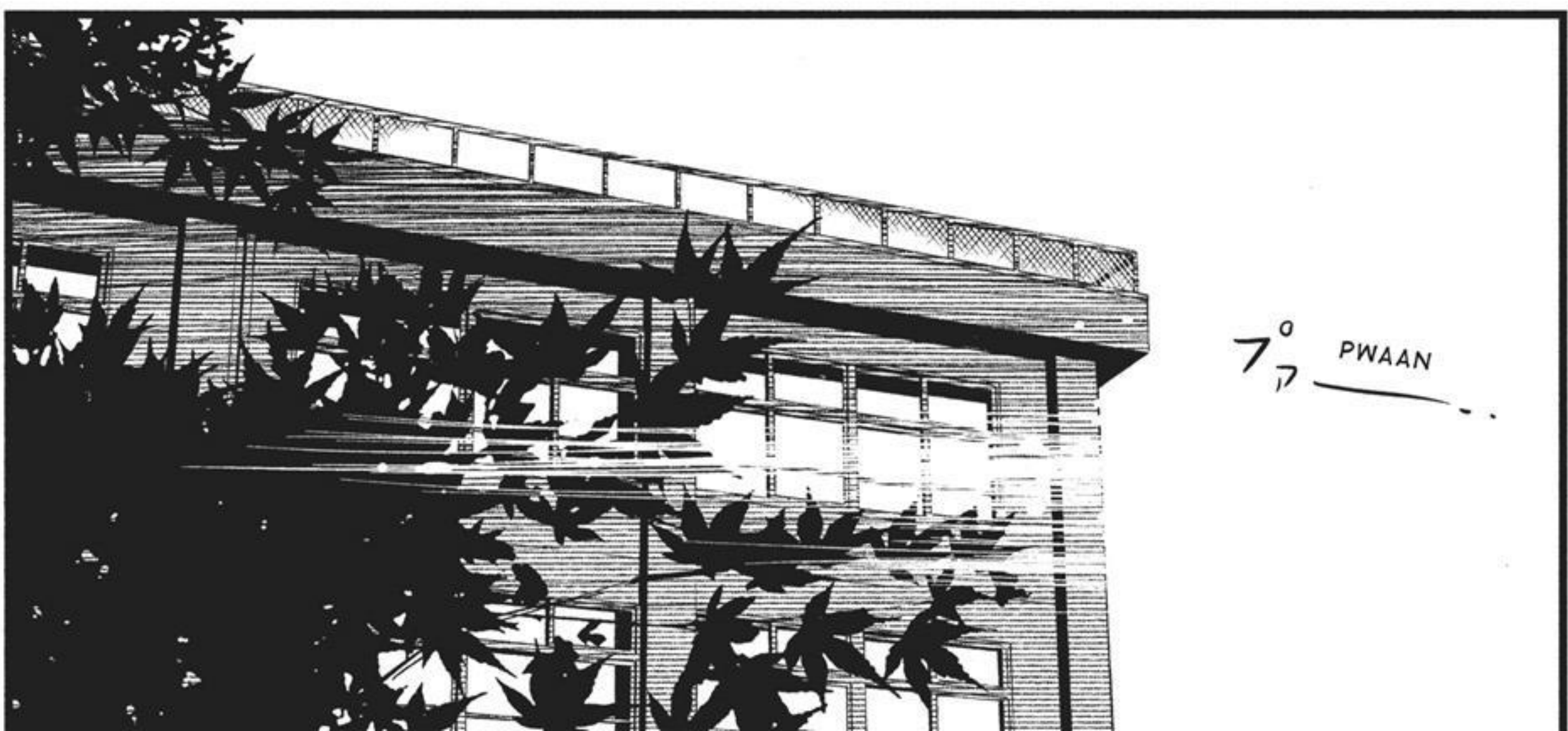
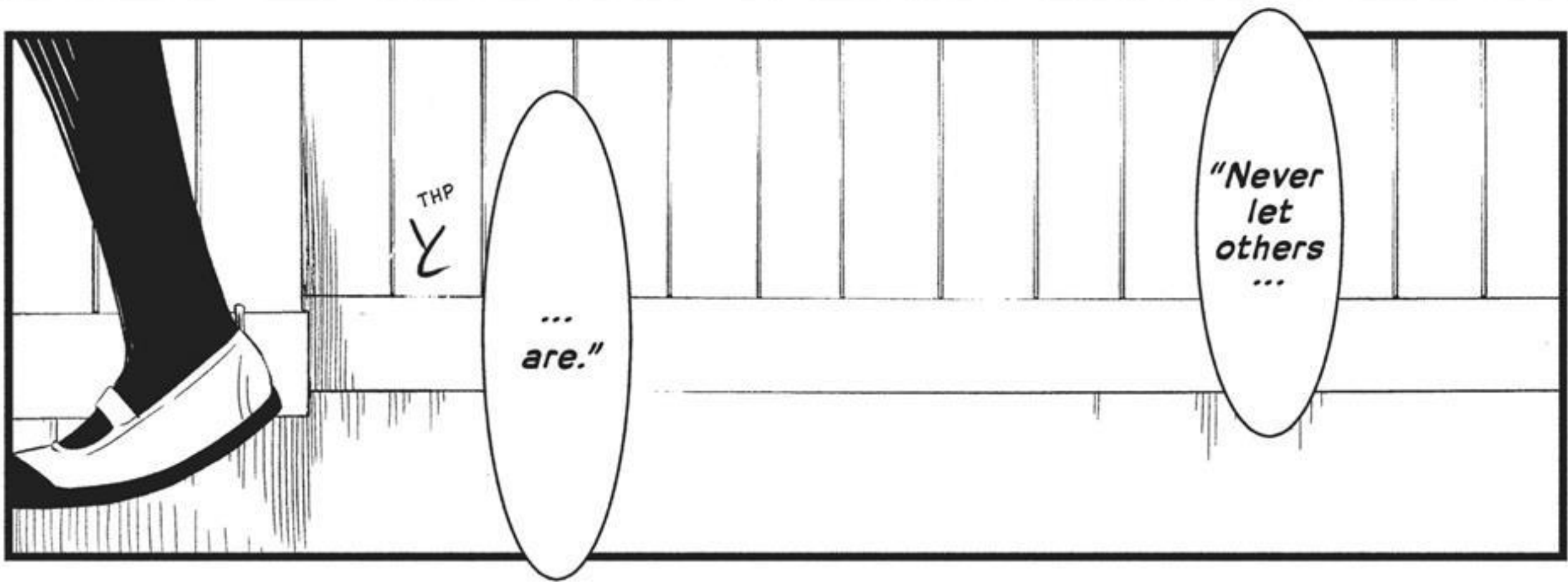




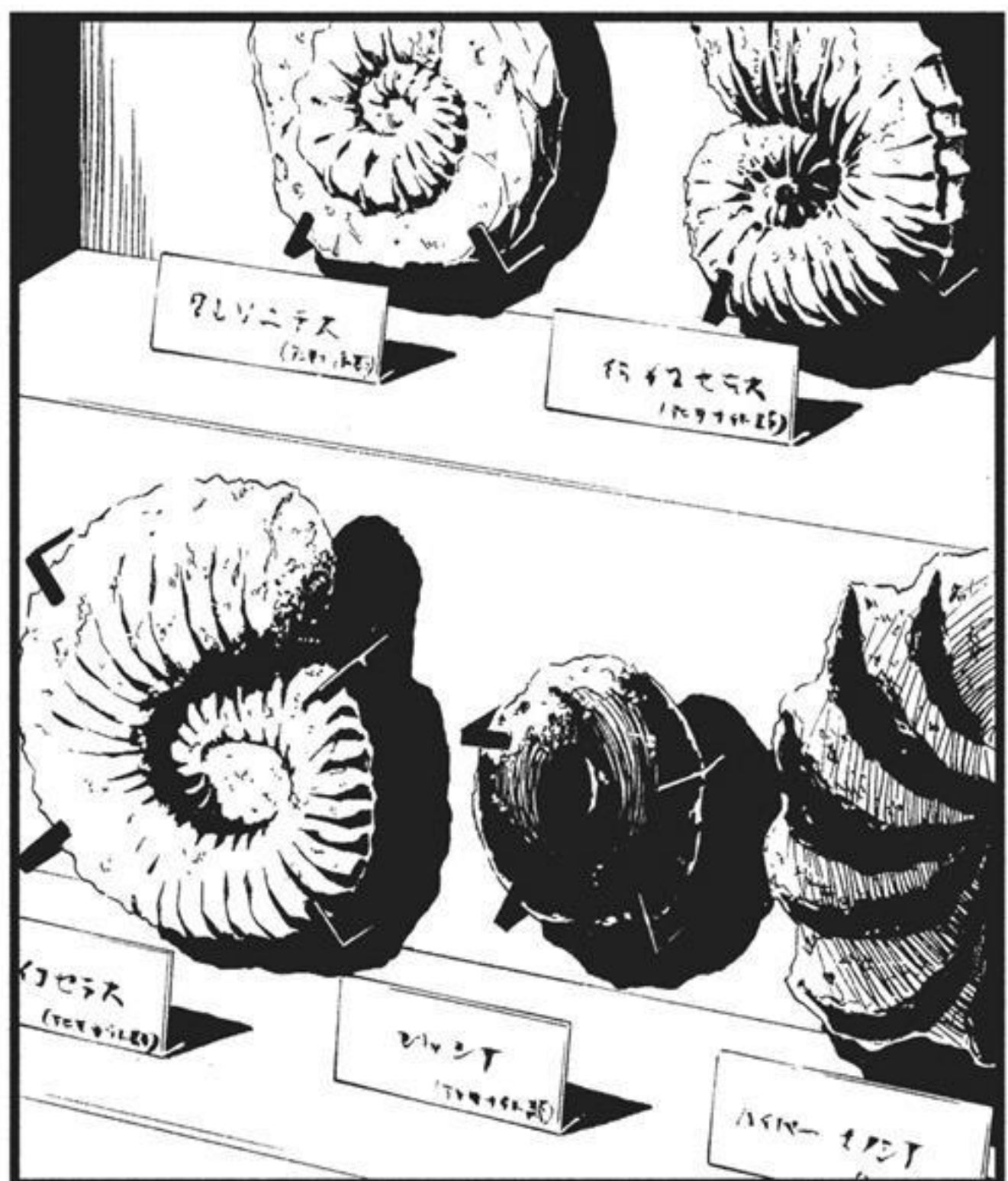
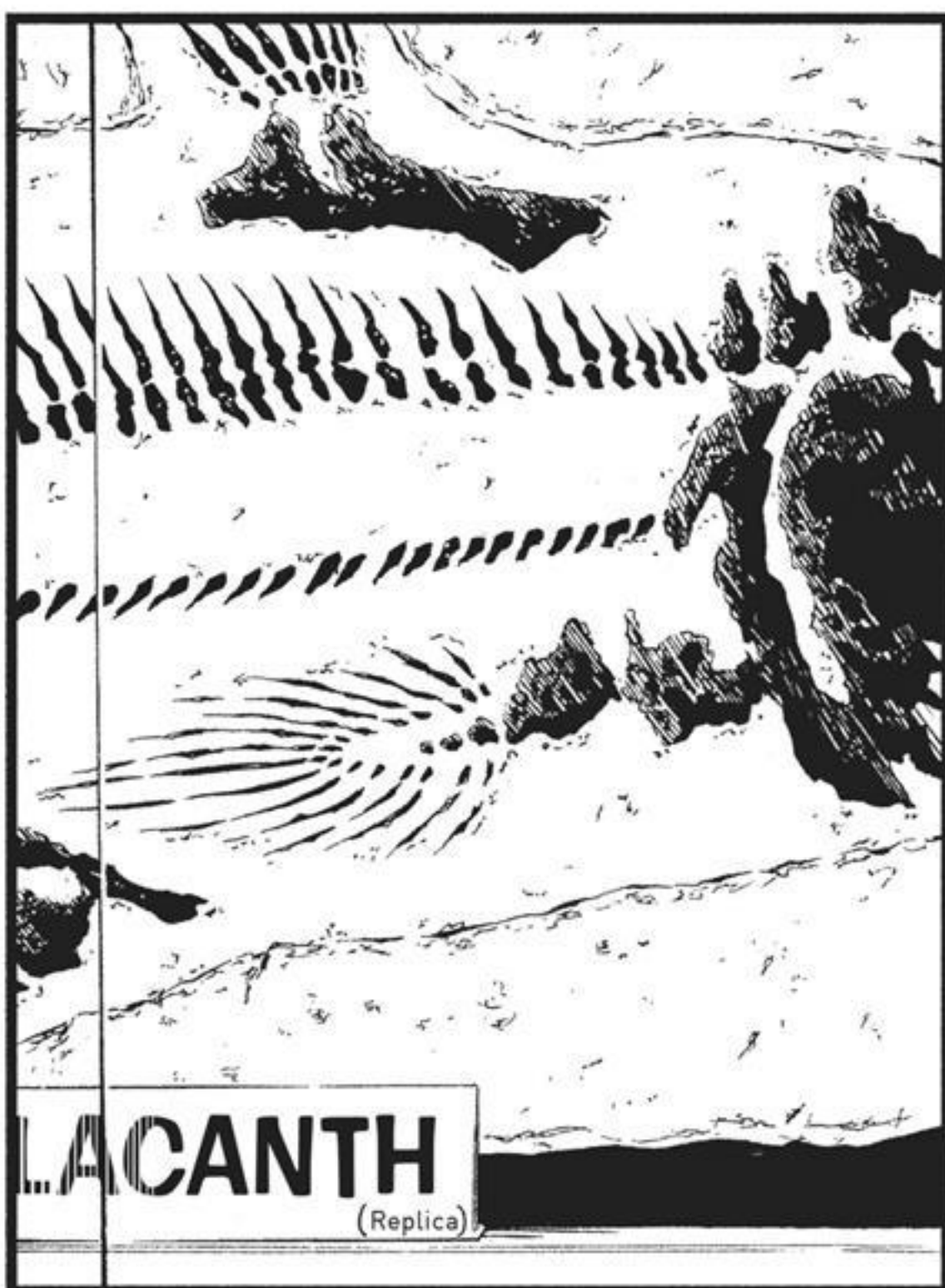
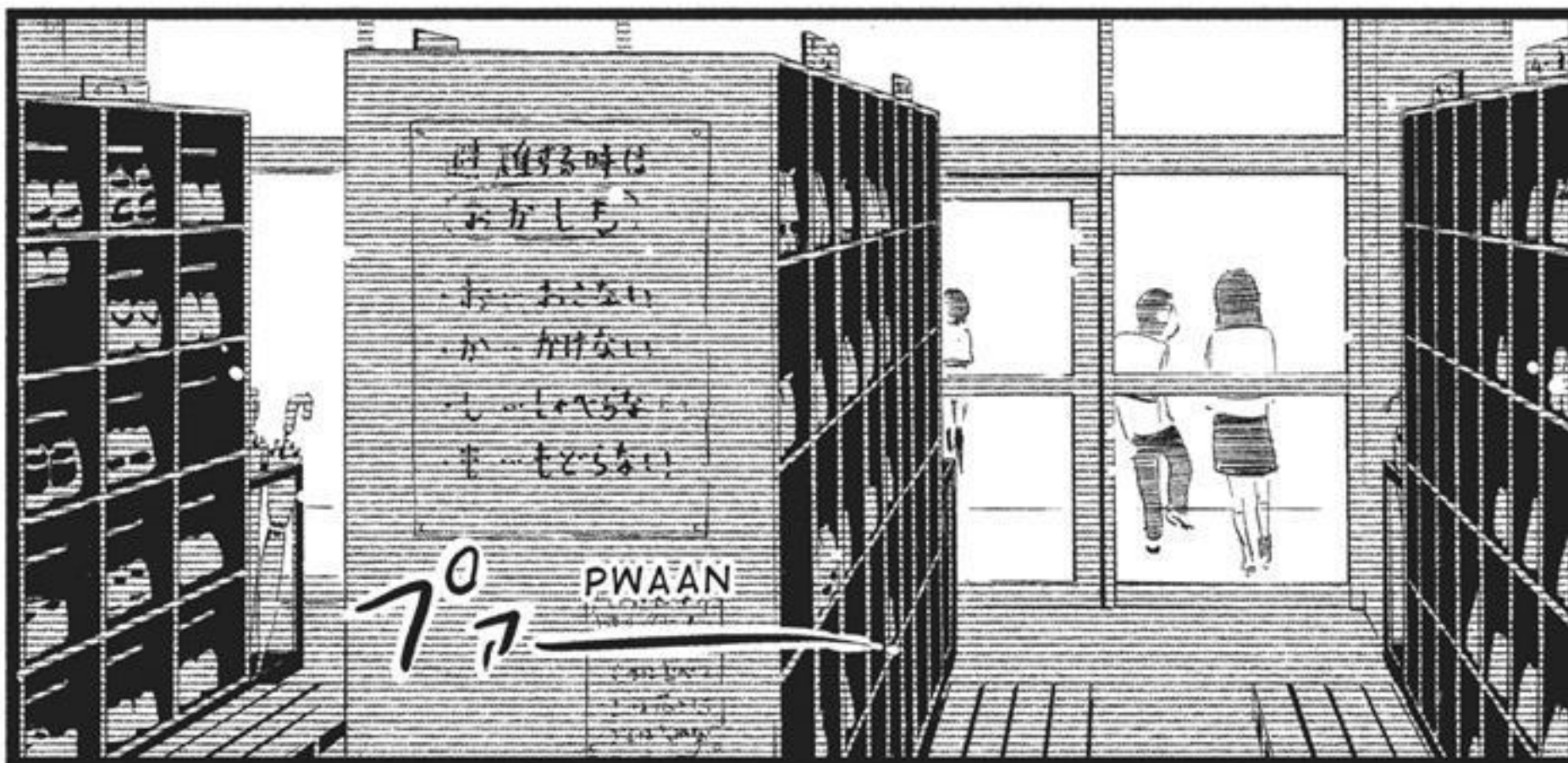




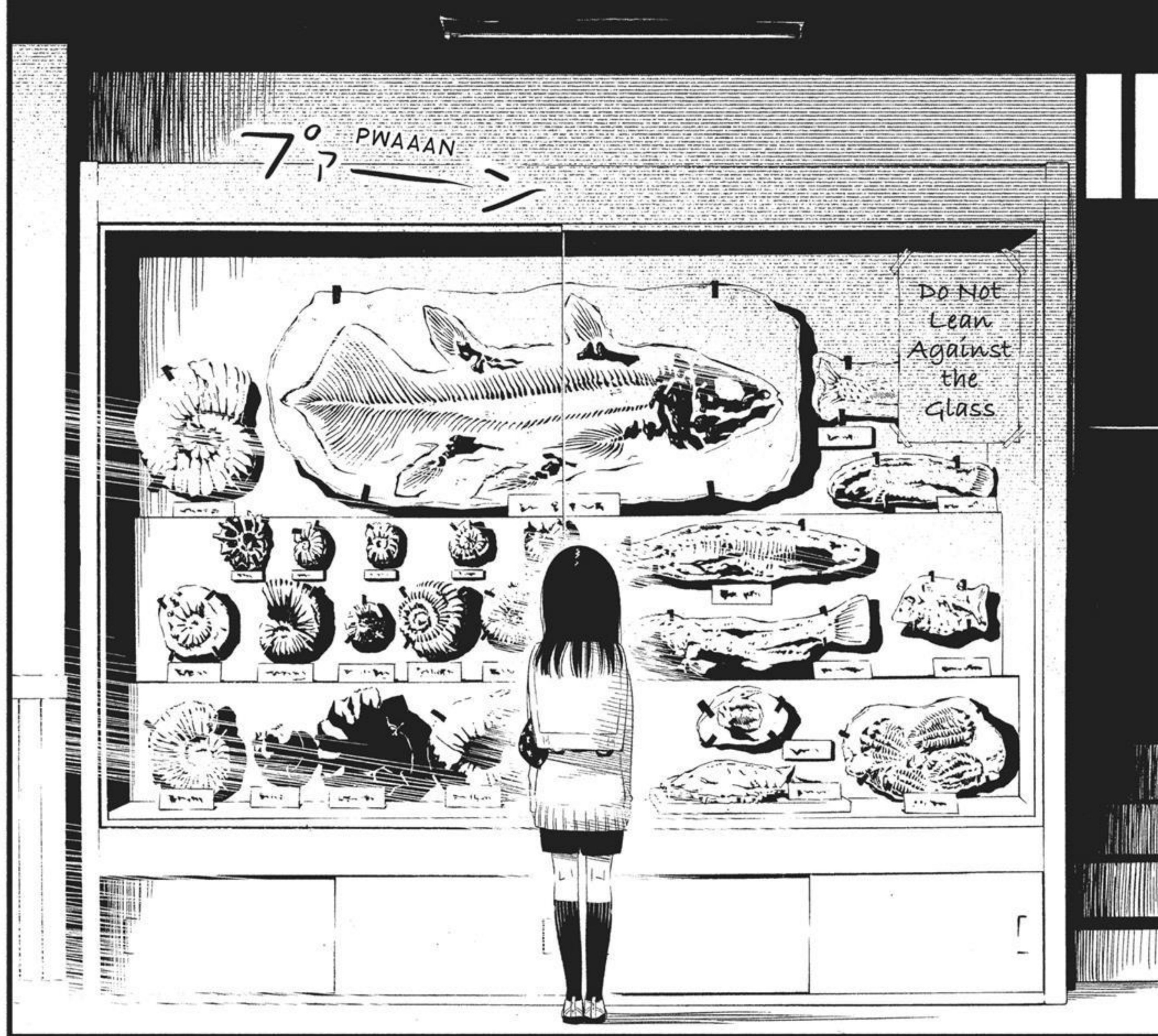




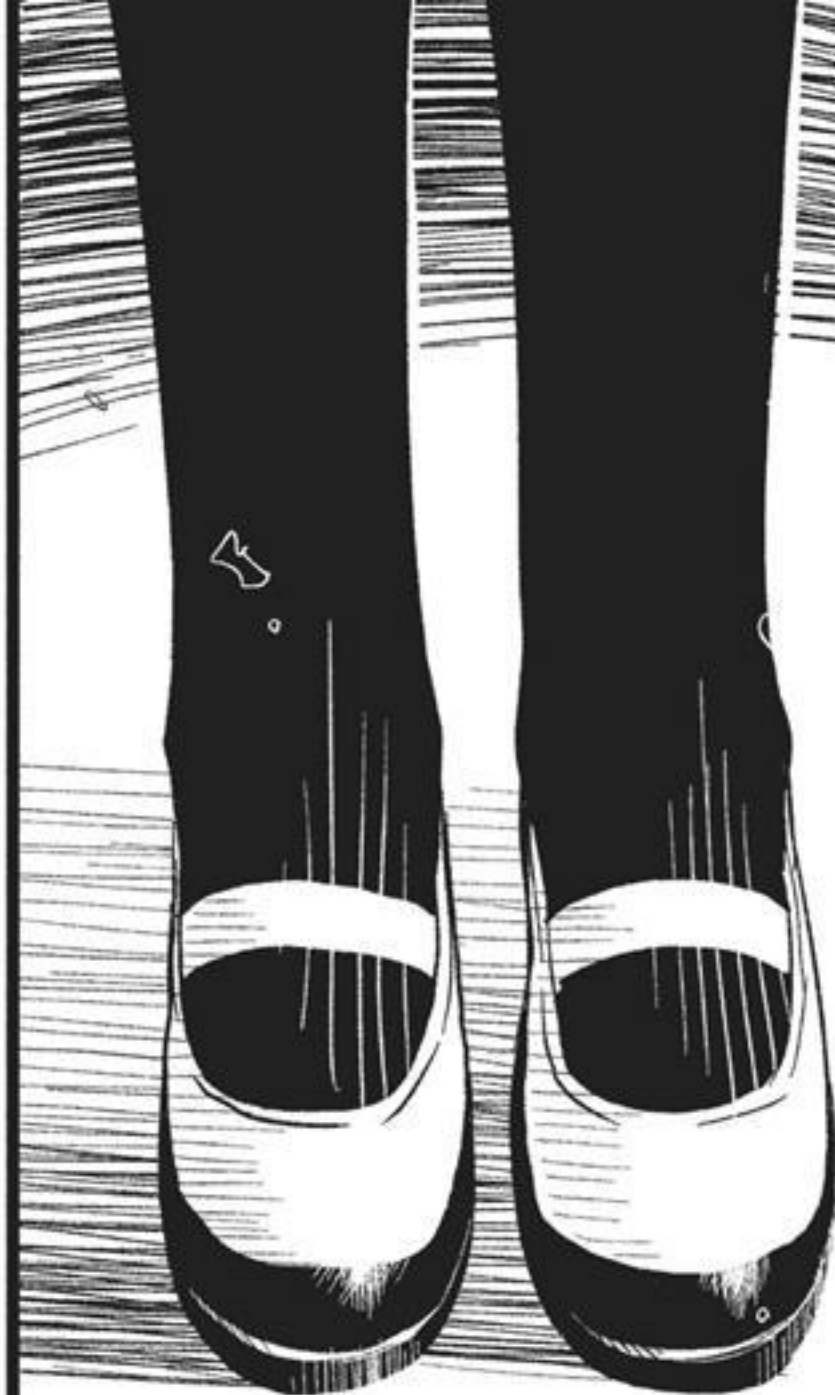




































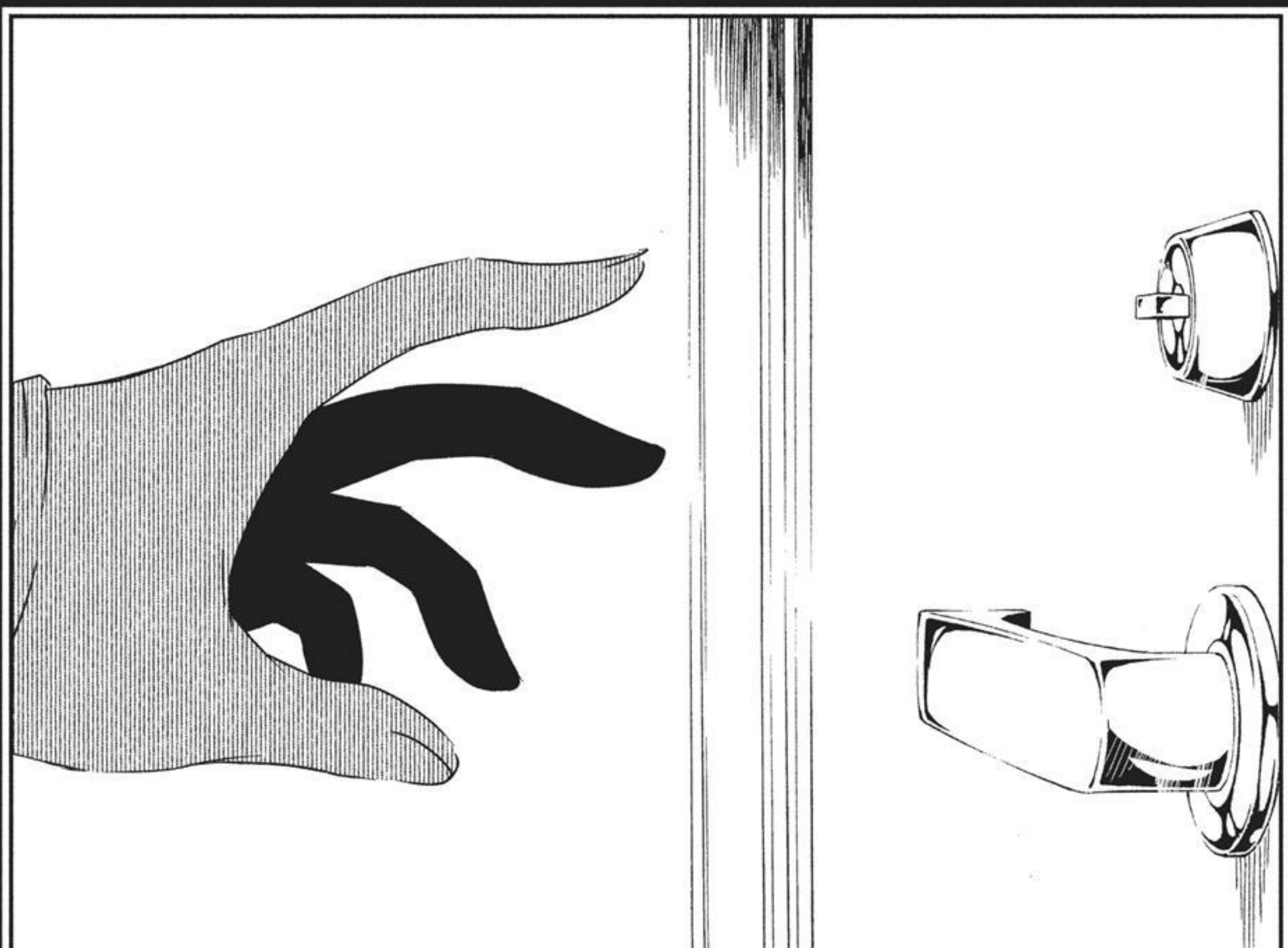
*of  
your  
pets."*

*"Always  
take  
good  
care*

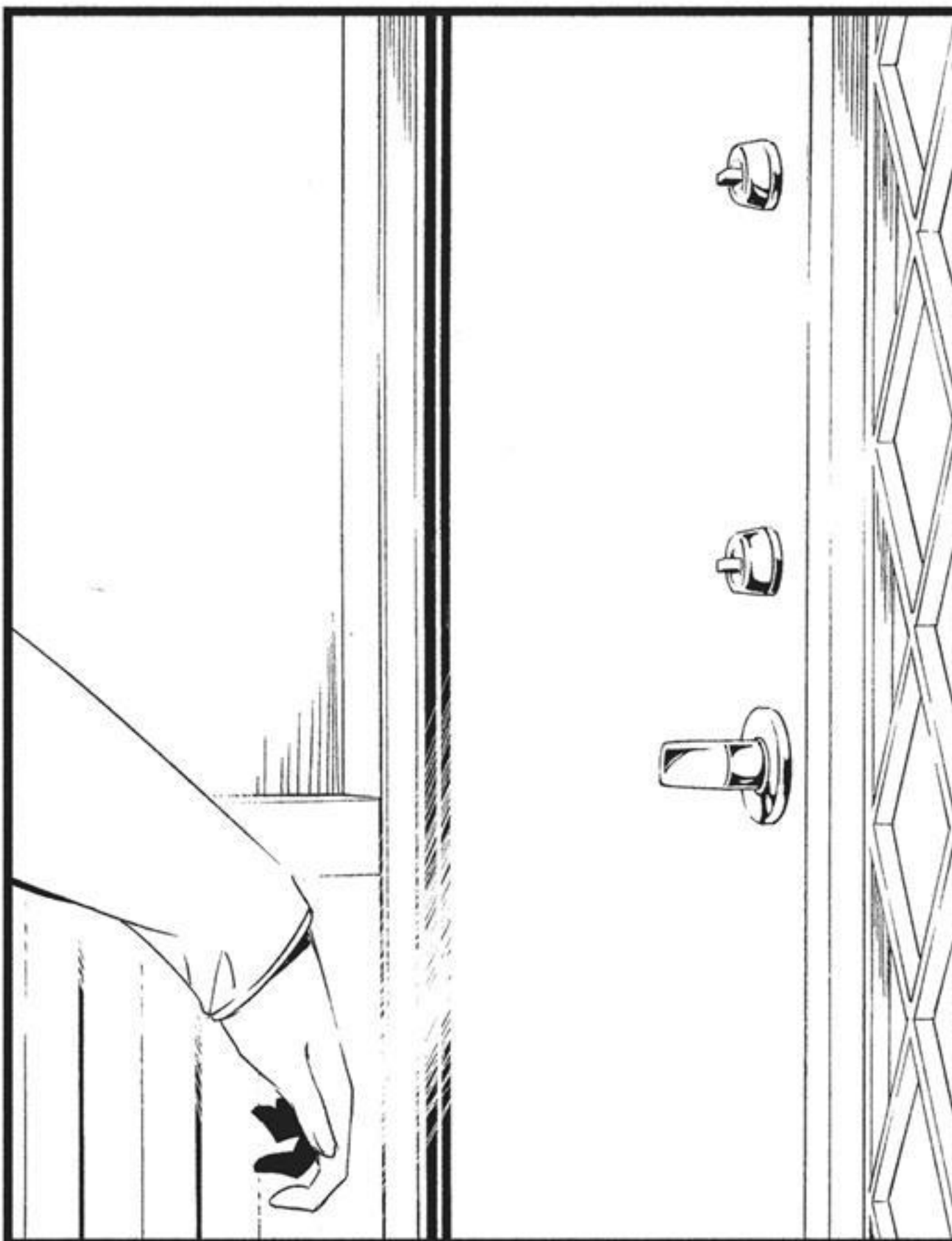




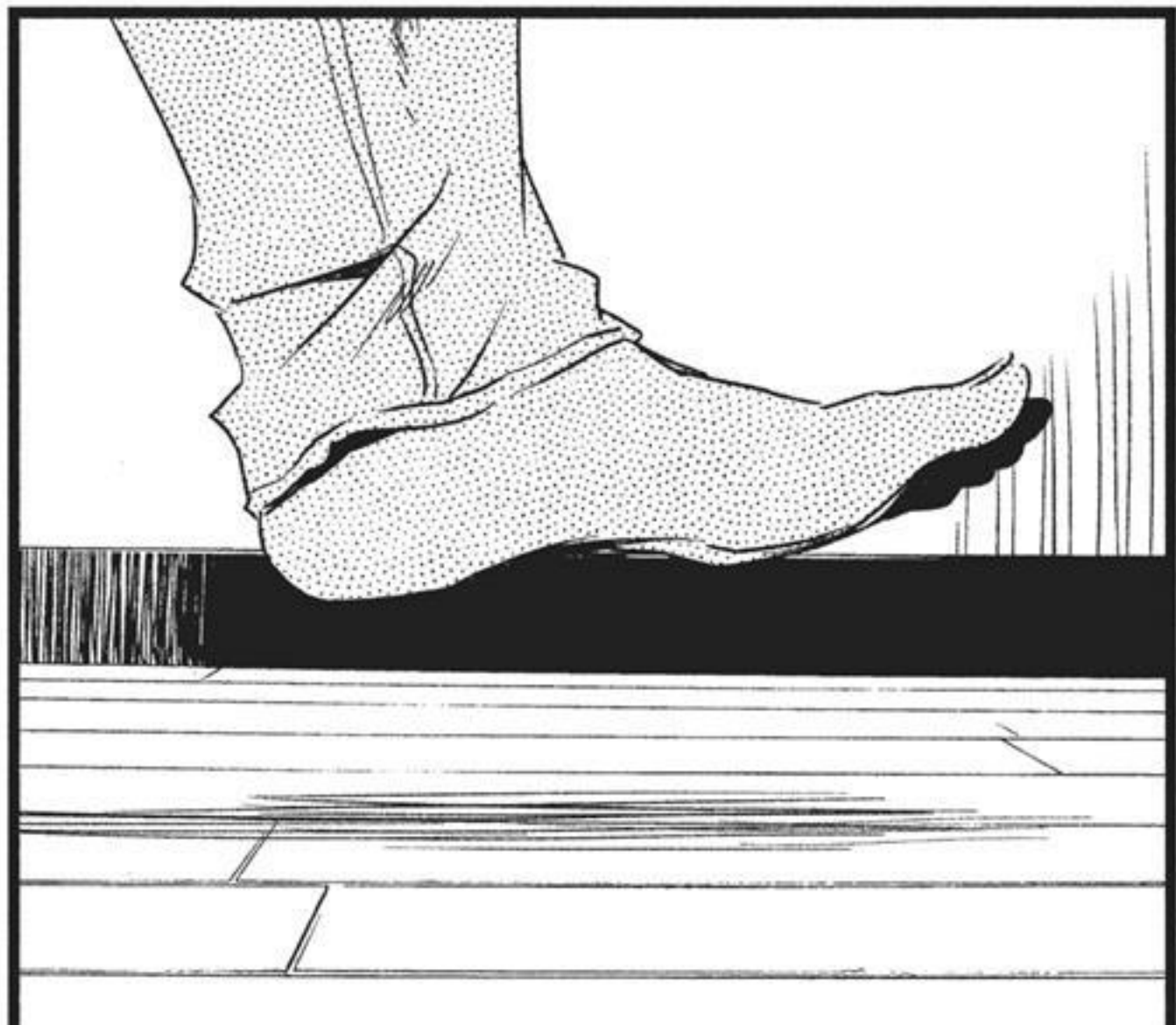














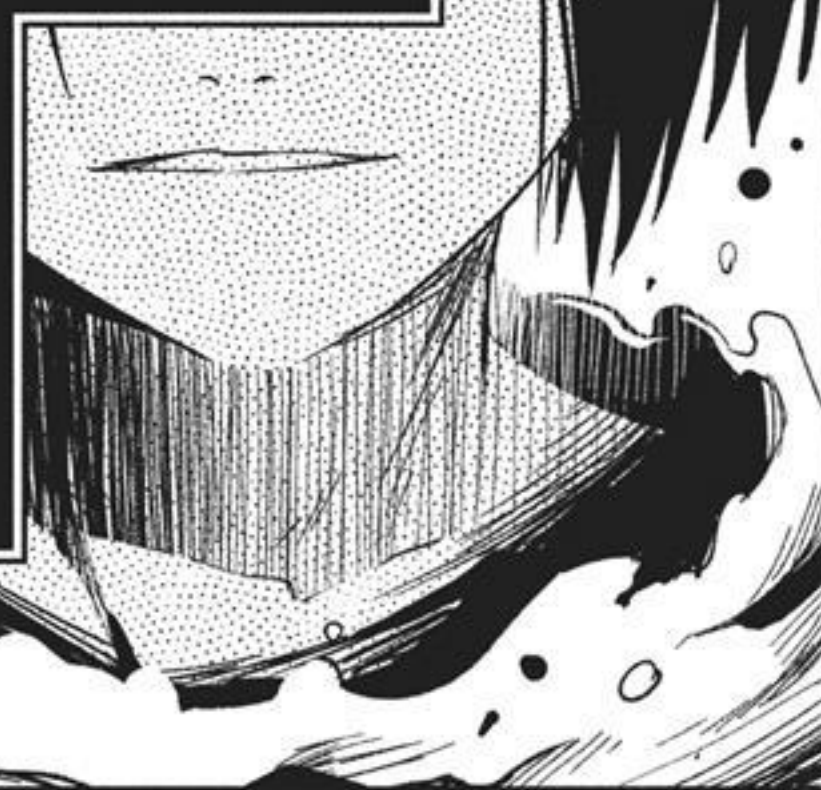


The bog  
could have  
swallowed  
me up to  
my throat,



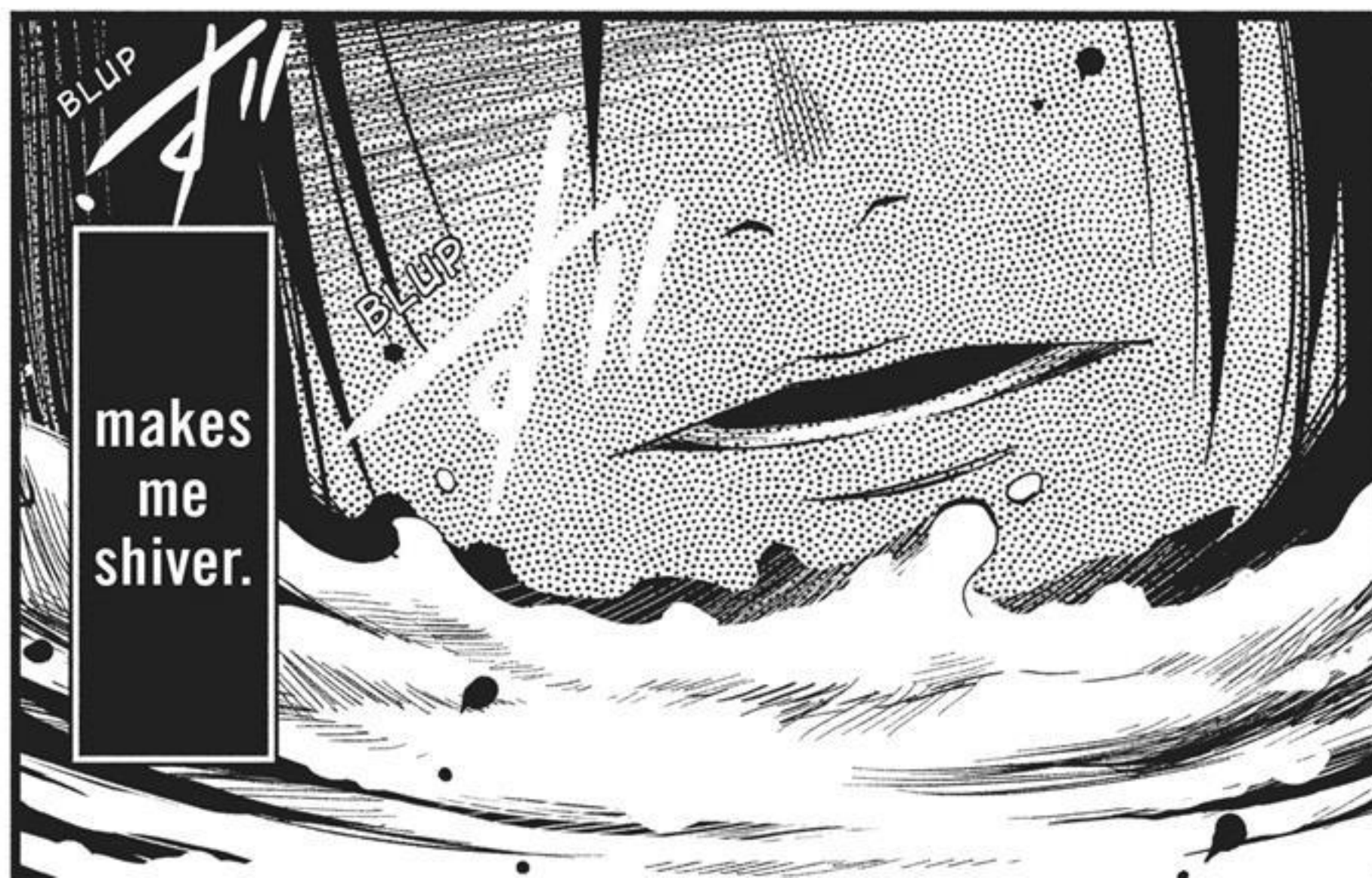
but  
so long  
as I could  
breathe,

I  
would've  
thought  
I was still  
fine.



but I'd  
decided to  
go down a  
path that  
gradually  
turned  
into a  
swamp.

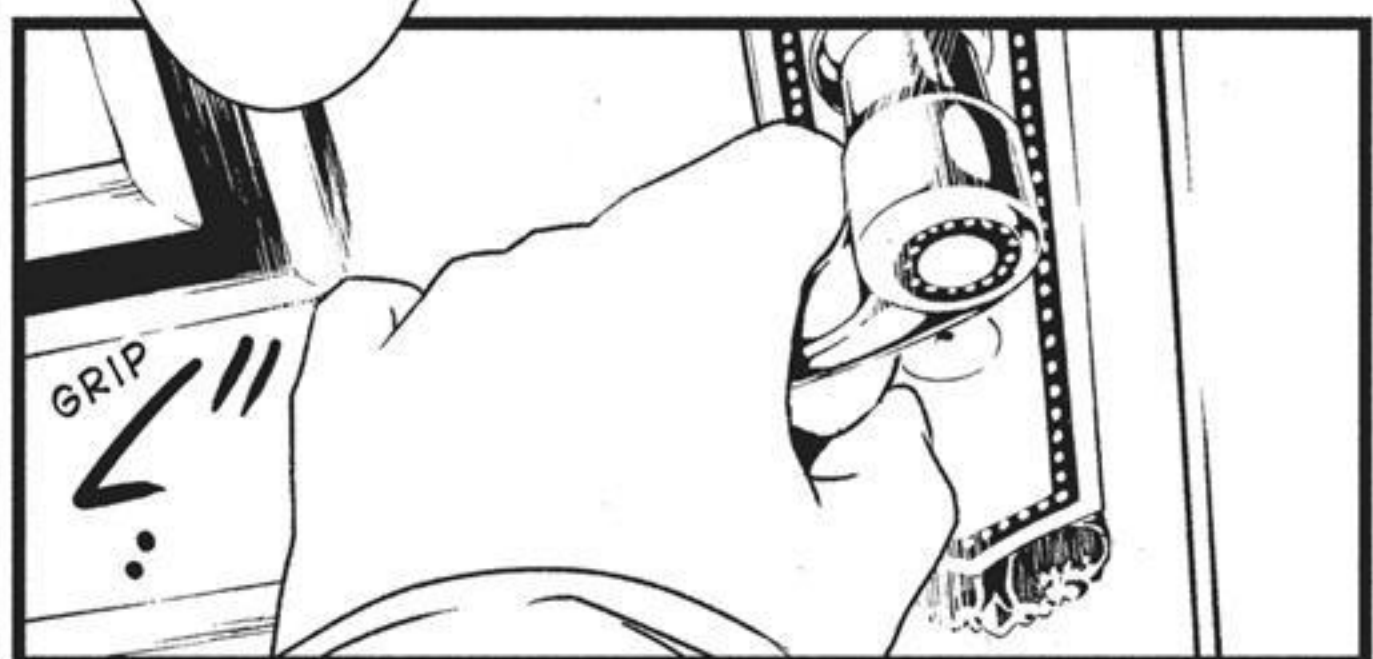
I hadn't  
realized  
it yet,



makes  
me  
shiver.

The thought  
of how reckless  
I was around  
the age of 20











oooo ✖



does  
it look  
like  
this  
...?!



Why



Why  
...?



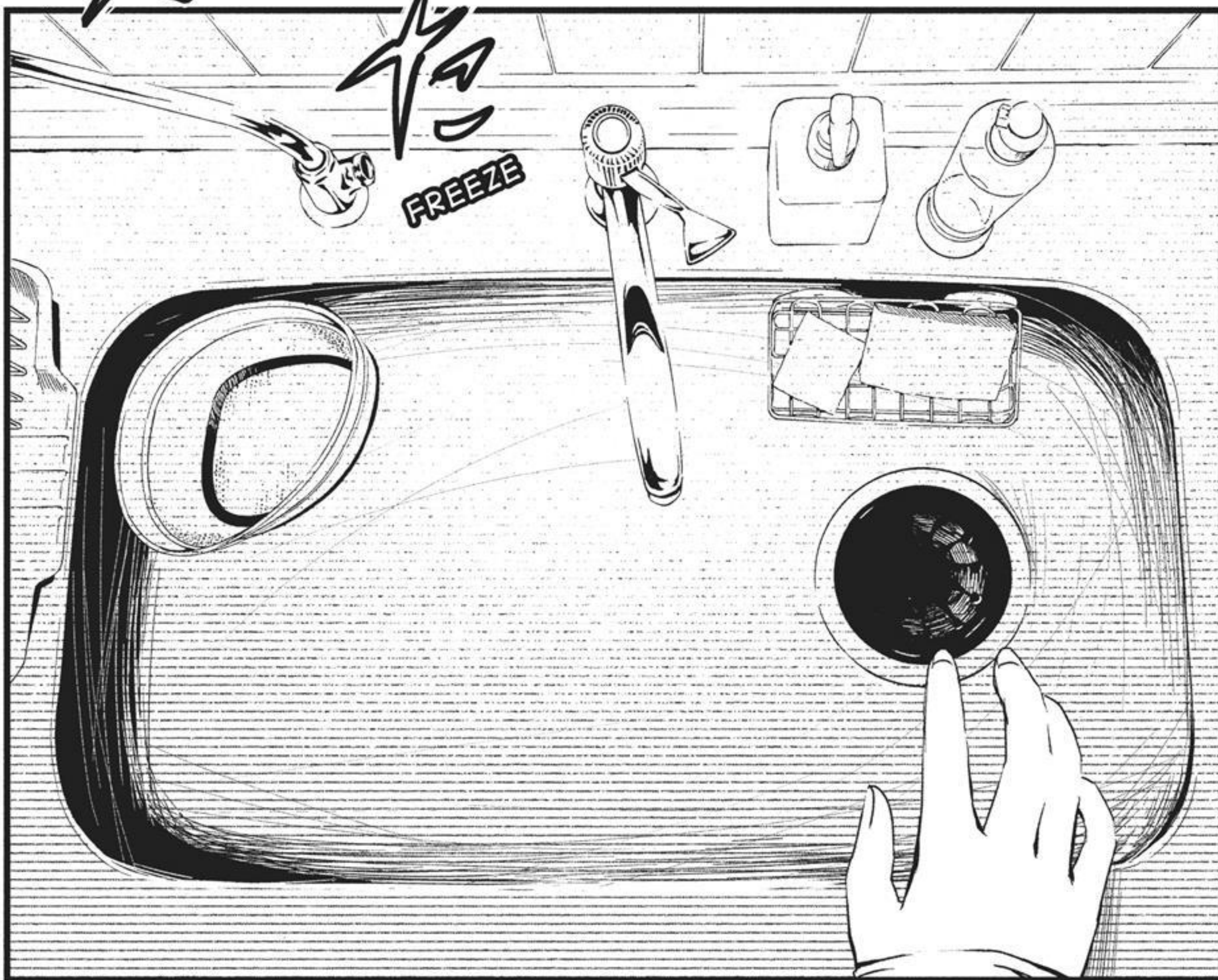
It looks  
as messy  
as my own  
apartment  
...!!

This  
huge,  
fancy  
living  
room  
...

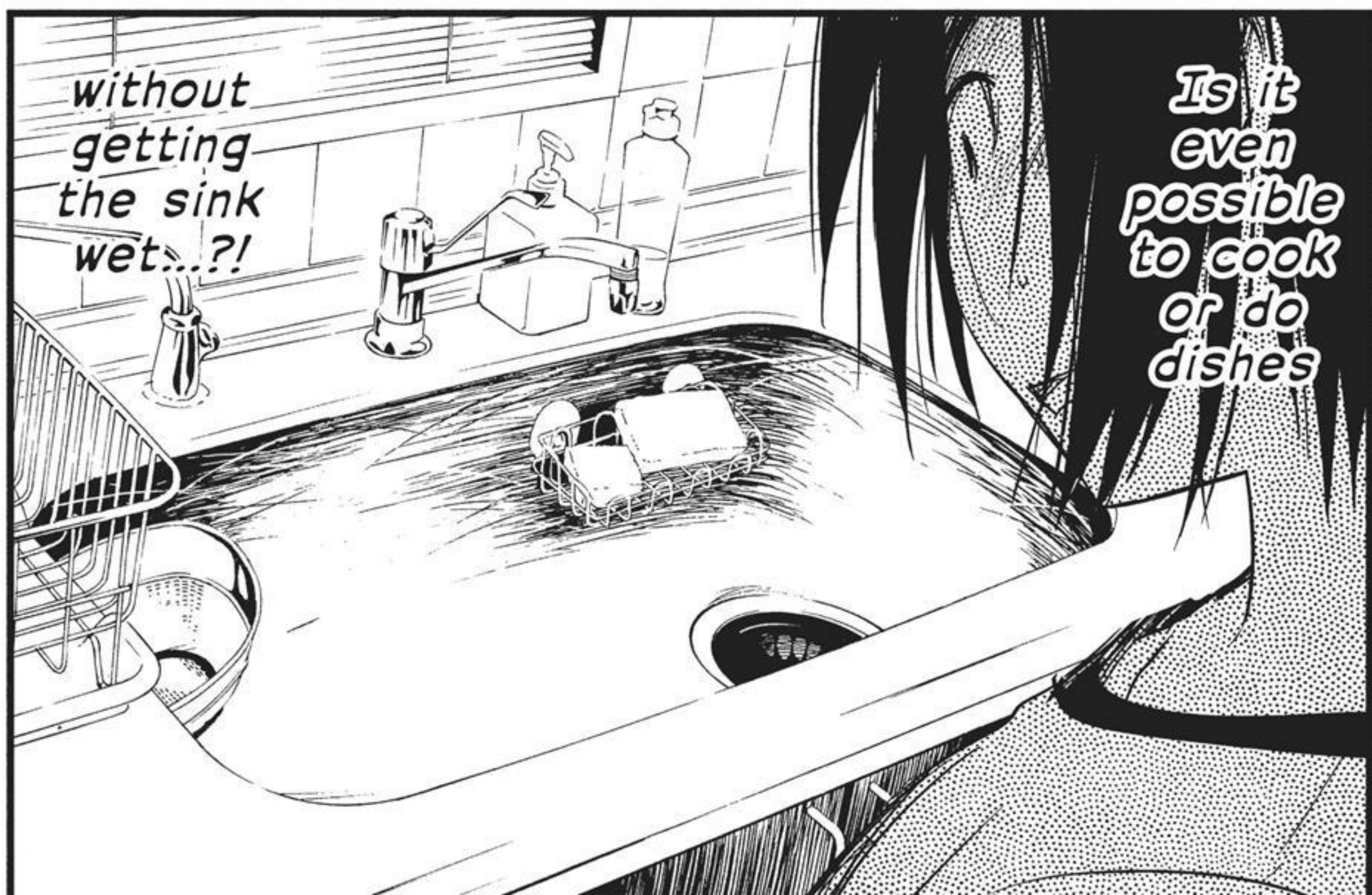
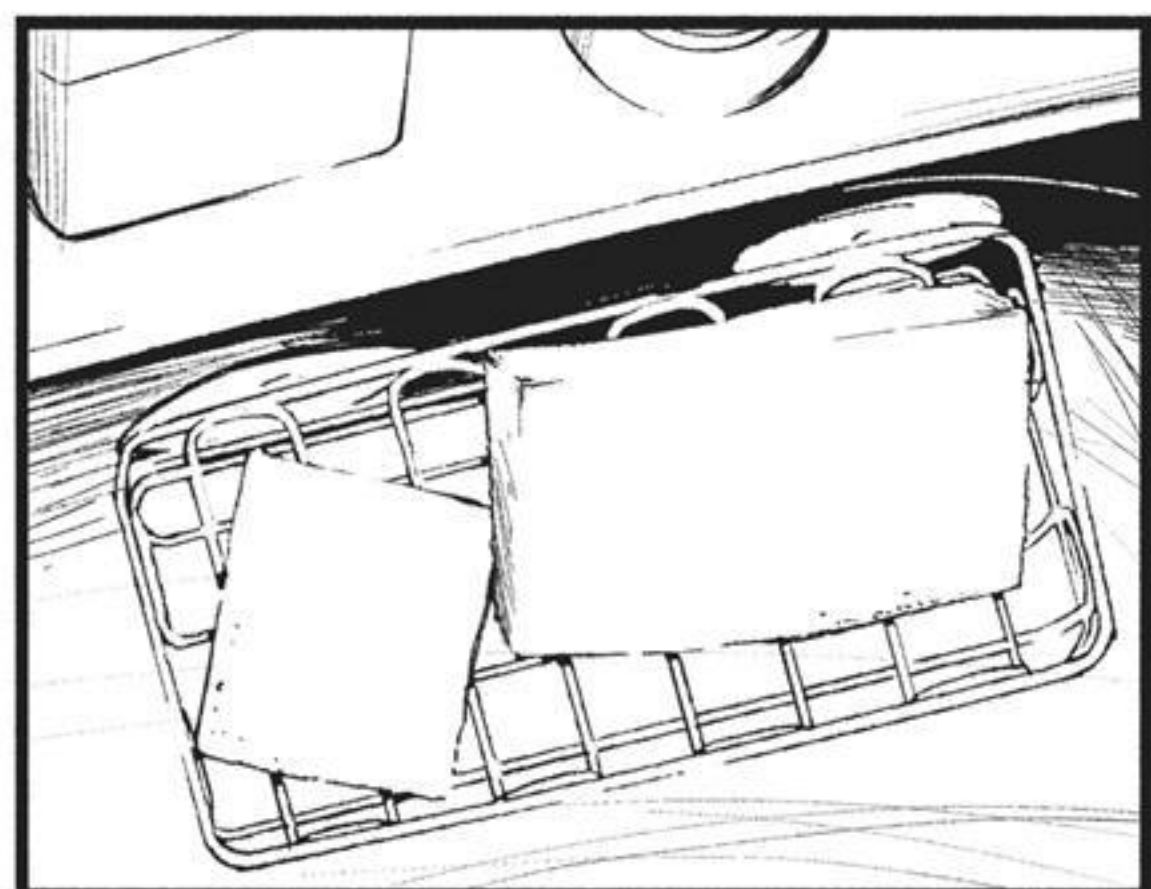




















PLINK

If only I'd given it more thought,



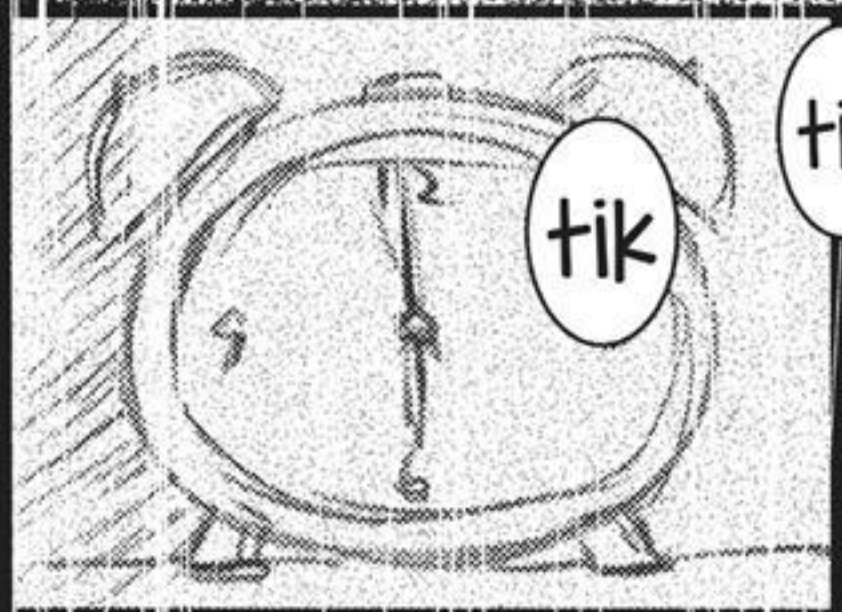
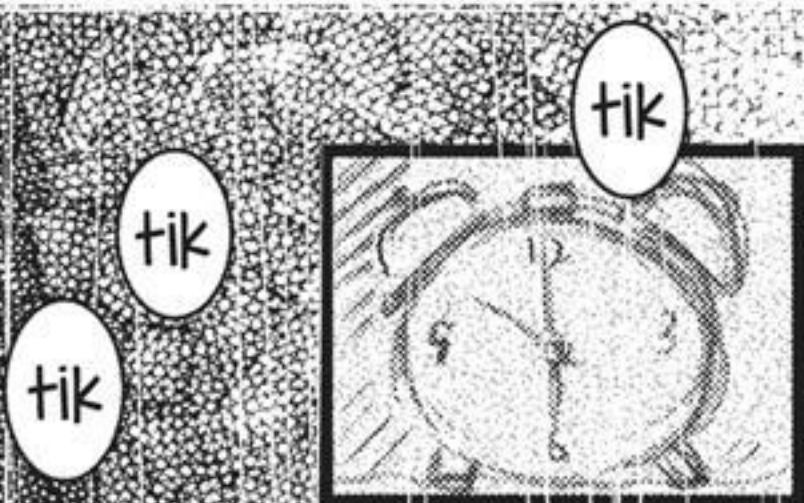
I should've been able to figure it out.



It looks like

I'd misunderstood something about U.

is living in this house all by herself.



U, a fourth-grade girl,









TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

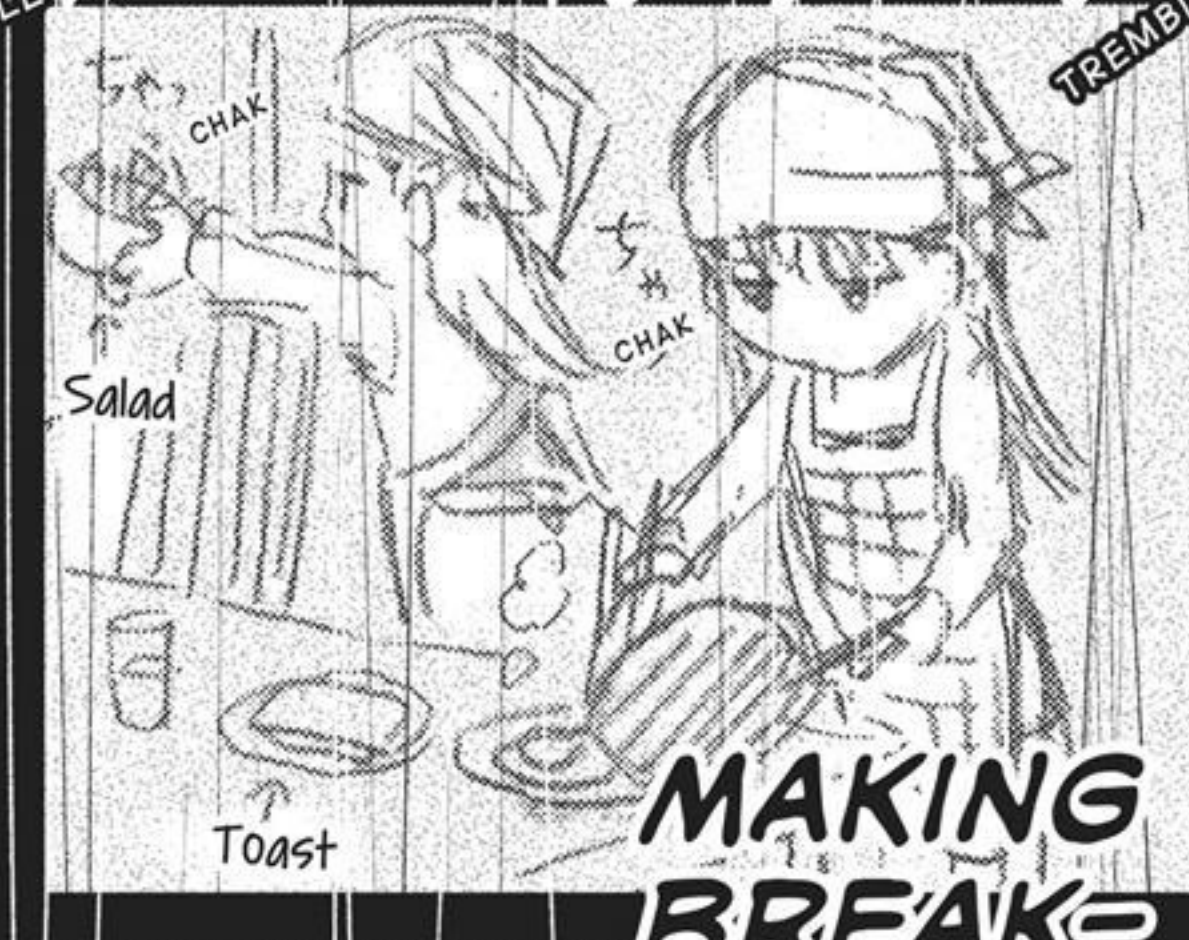
TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE



**DID I  
REALLY  
THINK**



**MAKING  
BREAK-  
FAST...**



**DOING  
THE  
DISHES**



TREMBLE

TREMBLE

TREMBLE

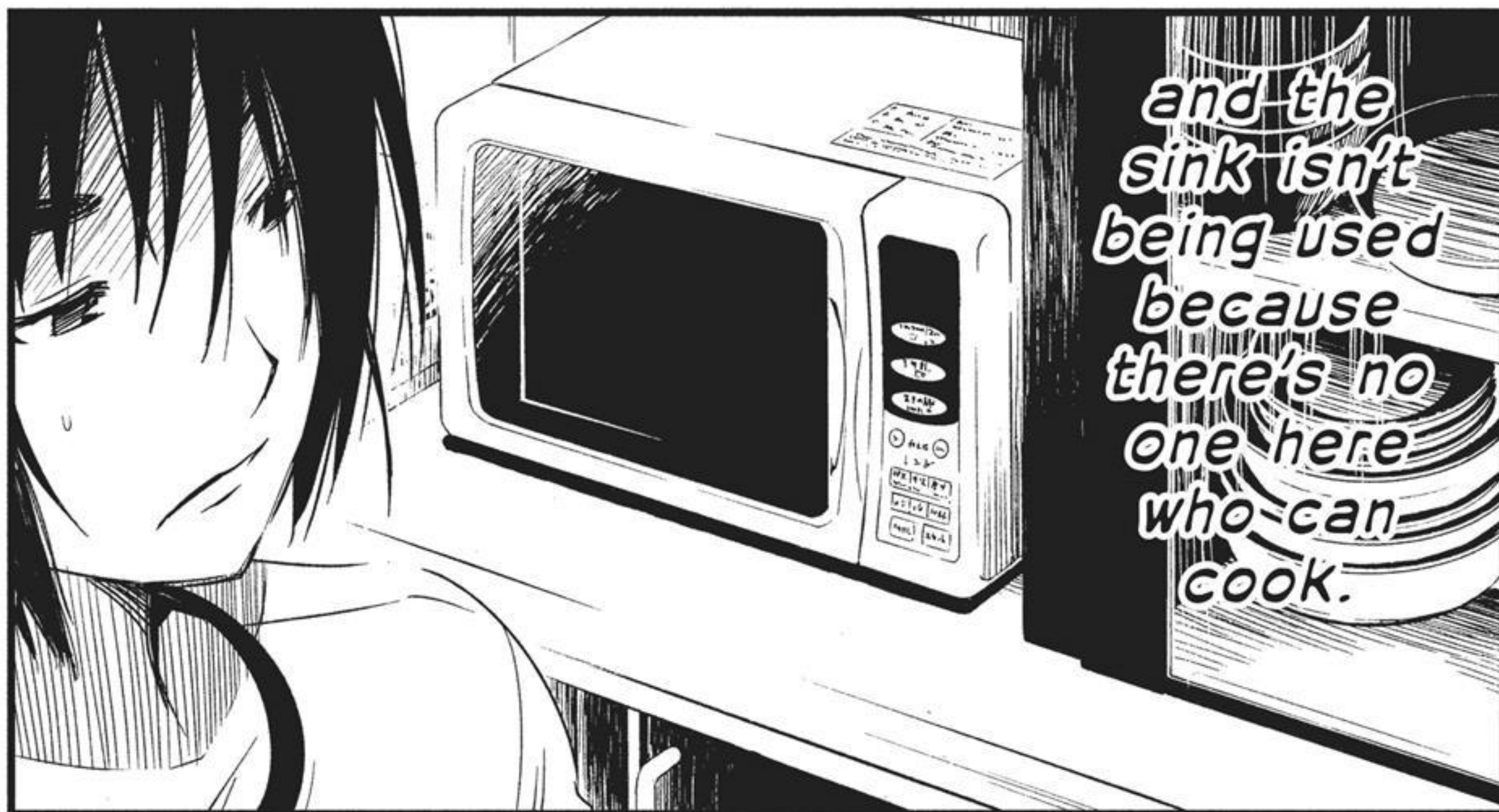
TREMBLE

TREMBLE









and the  
sink isn't  
being used  
because  
there's no  
one here  
who can  
cook.



as  
long  
as  
she's  
living  
here,

U has to  
have food  
somewhere  
around here,  
whether it's  
the kitchen or  
the living room.



But  
even  
so...

クズン



SHARP

*She  
has  
to...*

ク  
イ  
ン  
WREEN

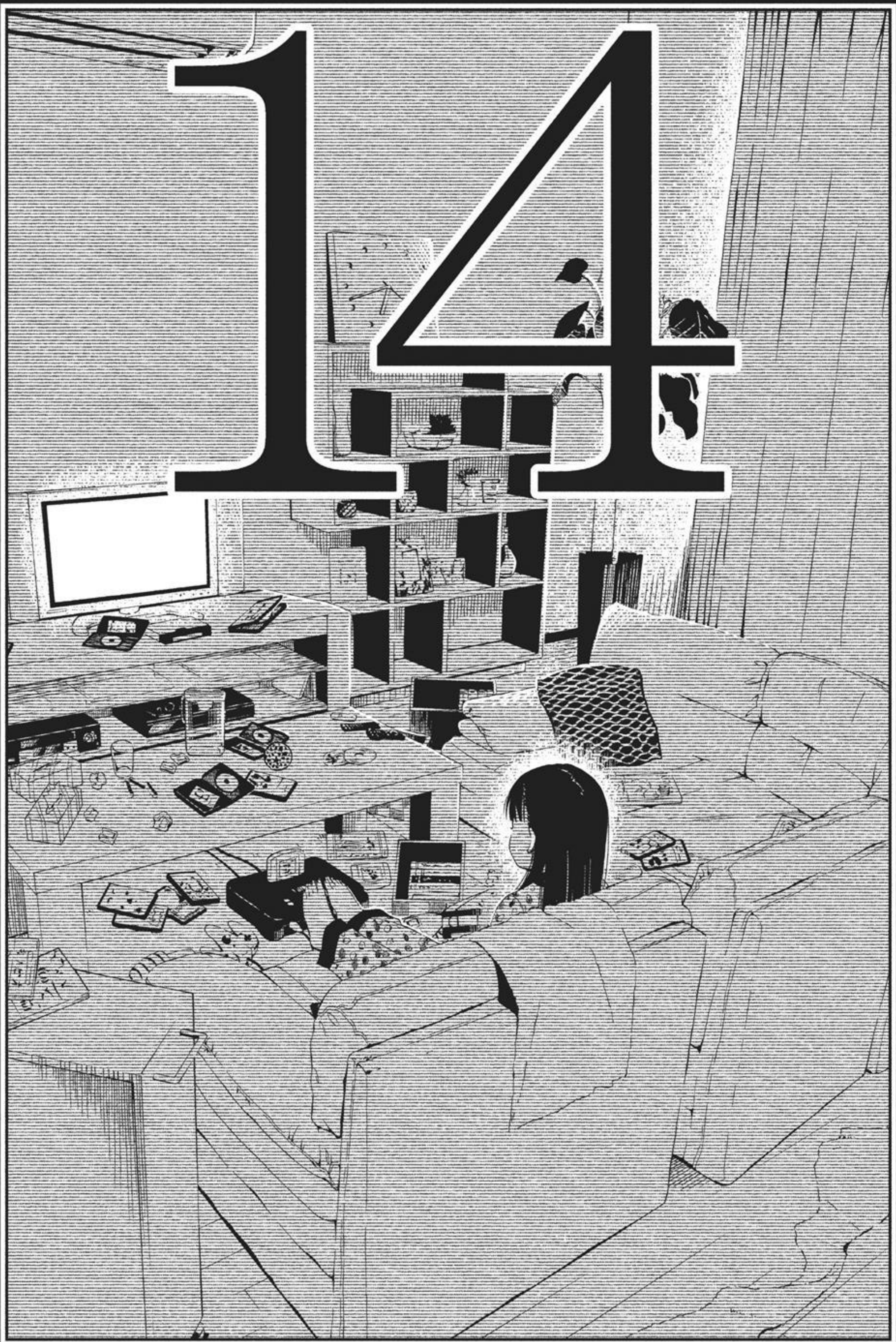
ク  
イ  
ン  
WREEN

ク  
イ  
ン  
WREEN

ク  
イ  
ン  
WREEN



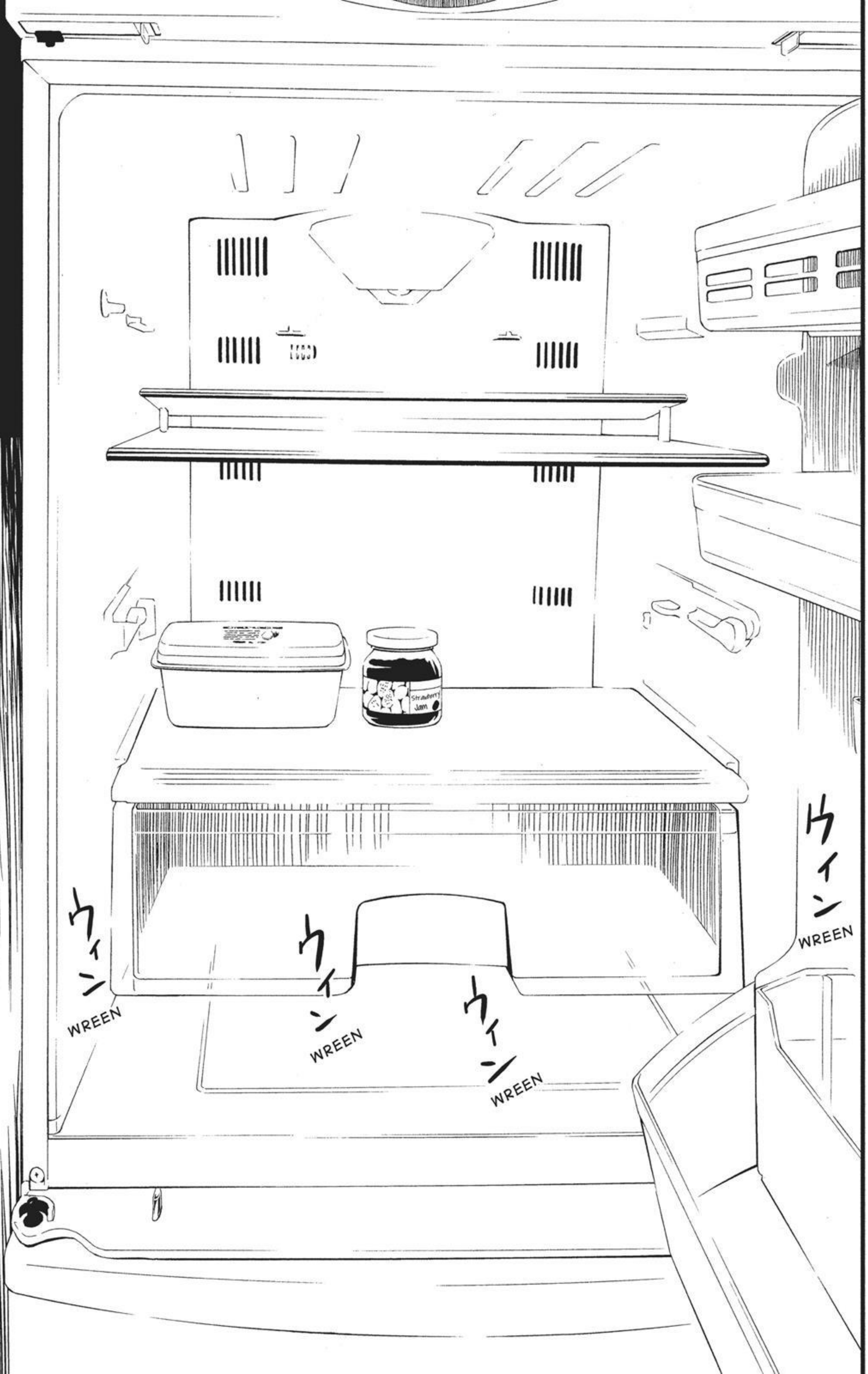






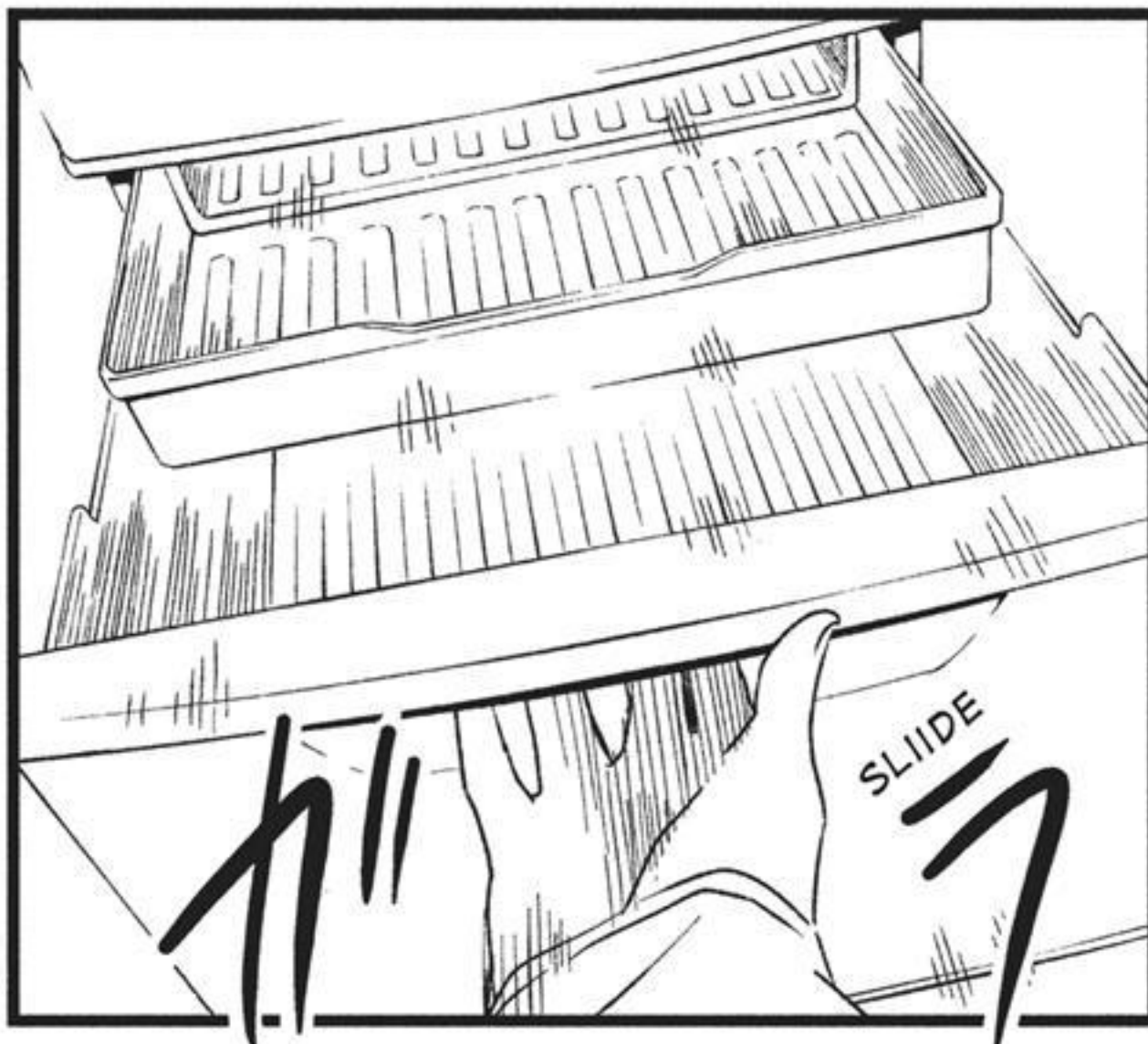






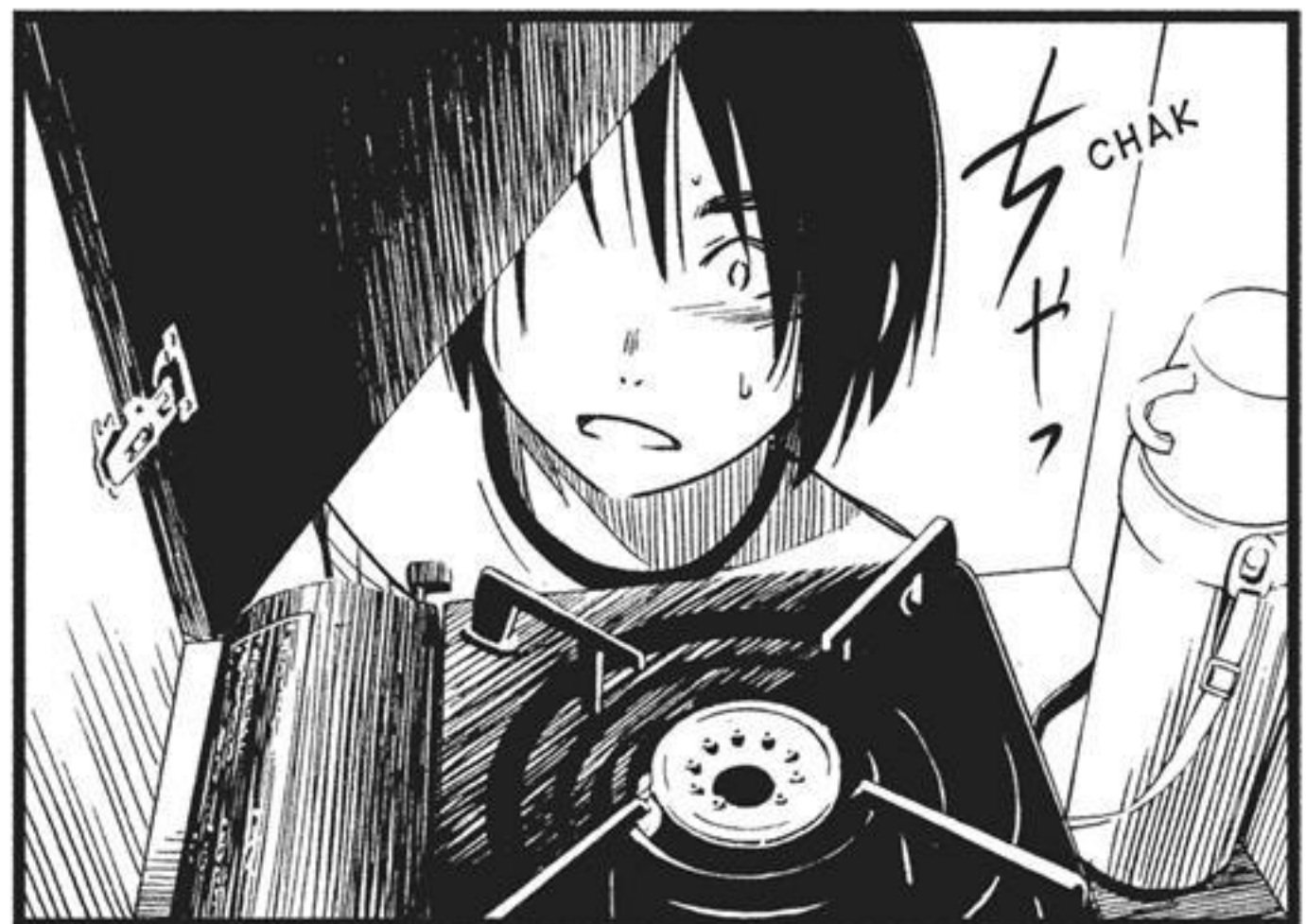


# EMPTY





# EMPTY



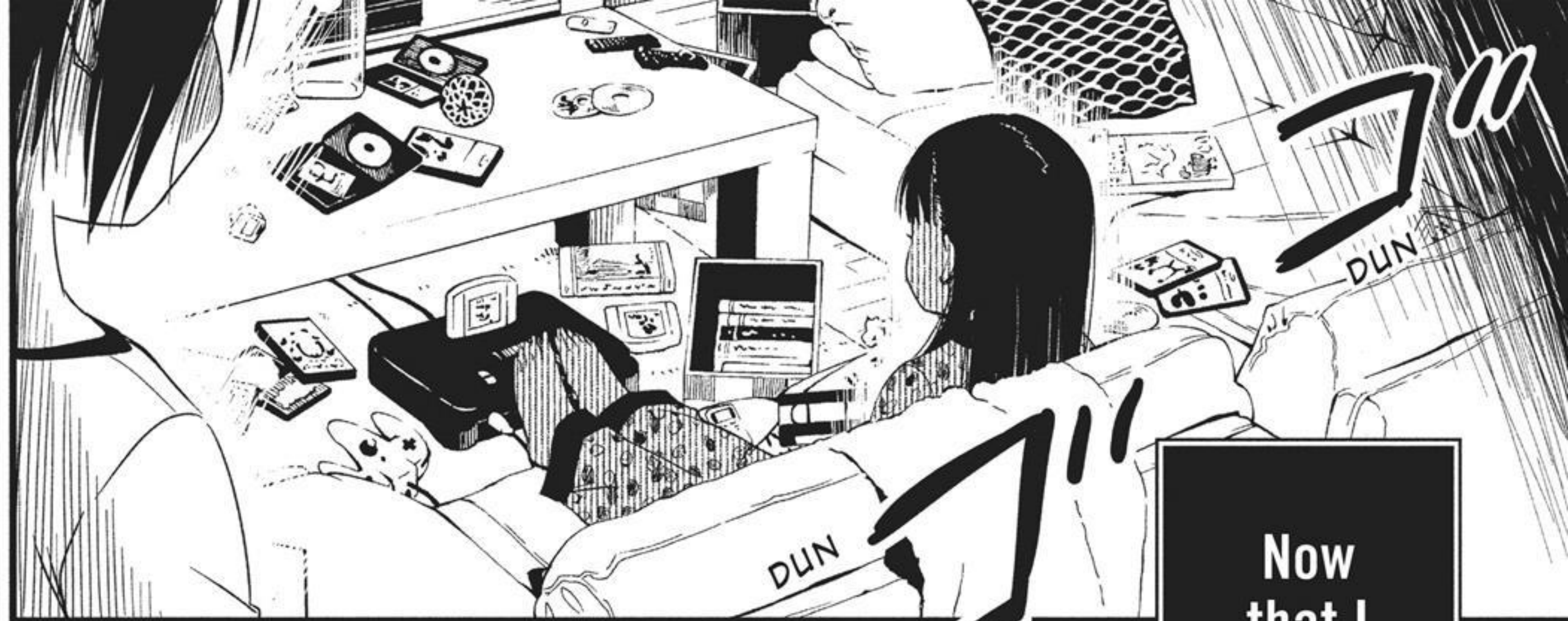












Now that I had been confronted with all of this evidence,

I couldn't deny it any longer.

Who was I trying to deny it to, you ask?

Myself. Who else?



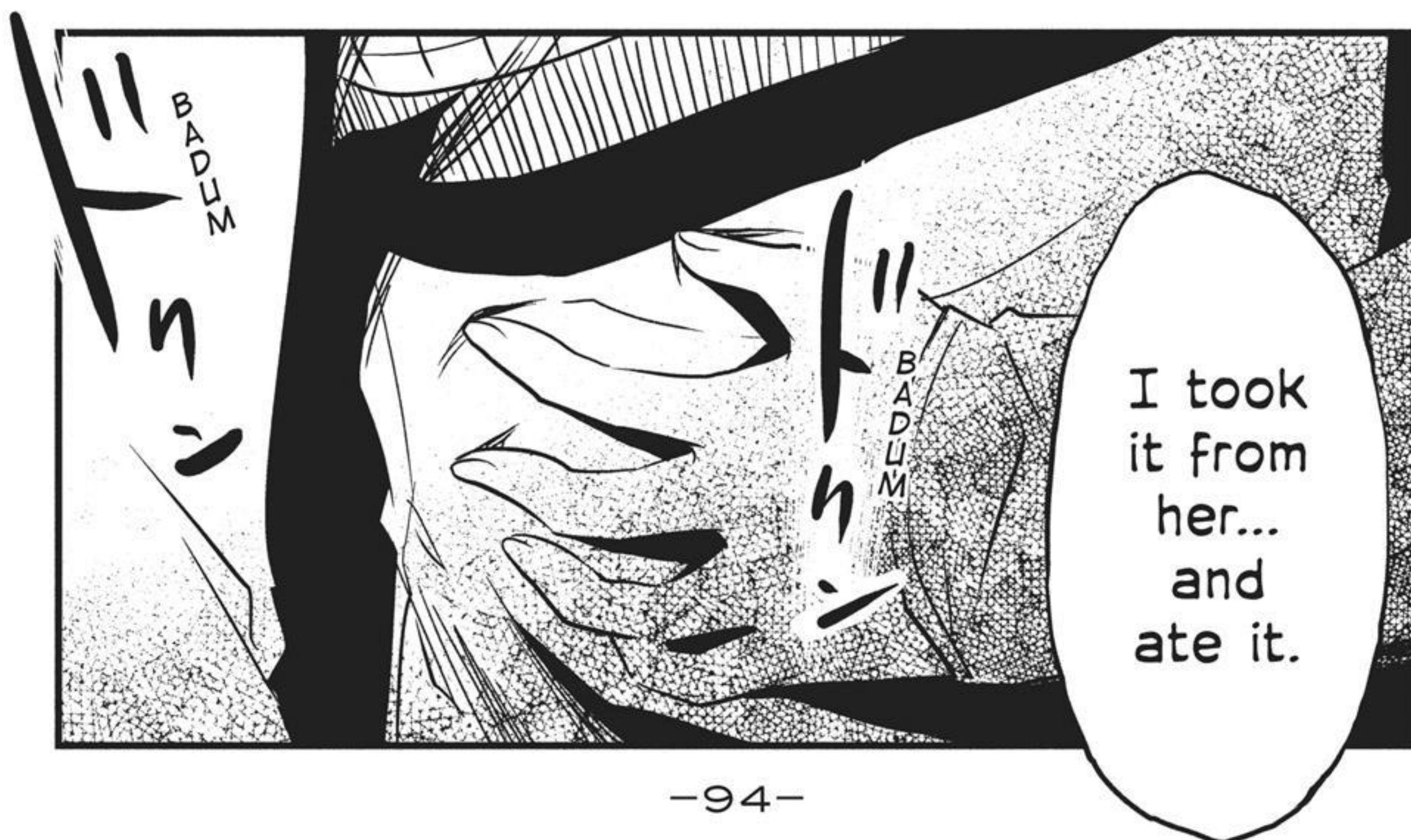










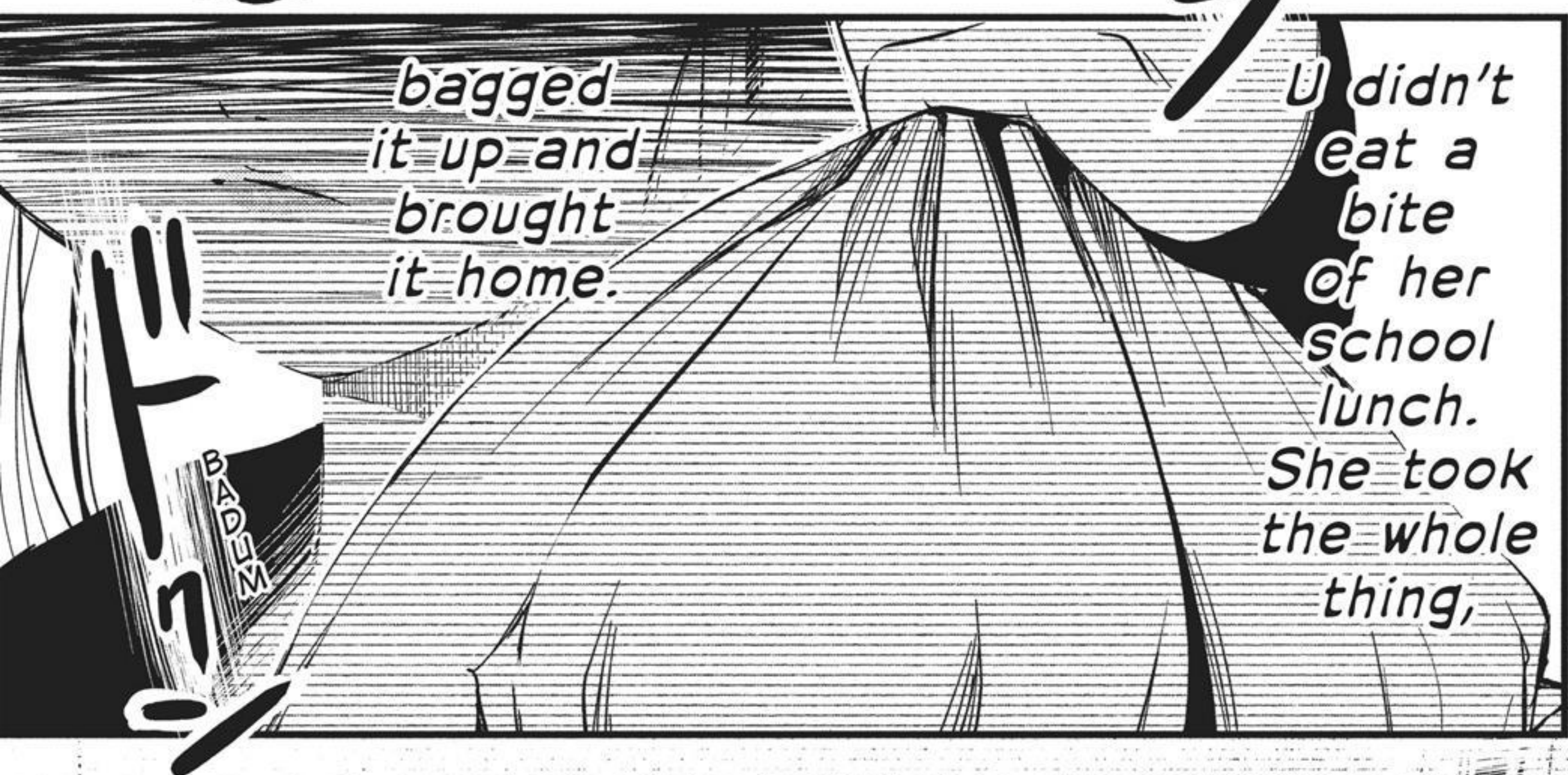






They  
were  
anything  
but...

Those  
weren't  
leftovers  
...



*bagged  
it up and  
brought  
it home.*

*I didn't  
eat a  
bite  
of her  
school  
lunch.  
She took  
the whole  
thing,*



*For  
my  
sake  
...*

Food.



*for a  
hungry  
child  
to do  
that*

*Think  
of just  
how much  
willpower  
it took*

BADUM

BADUM

BADUM

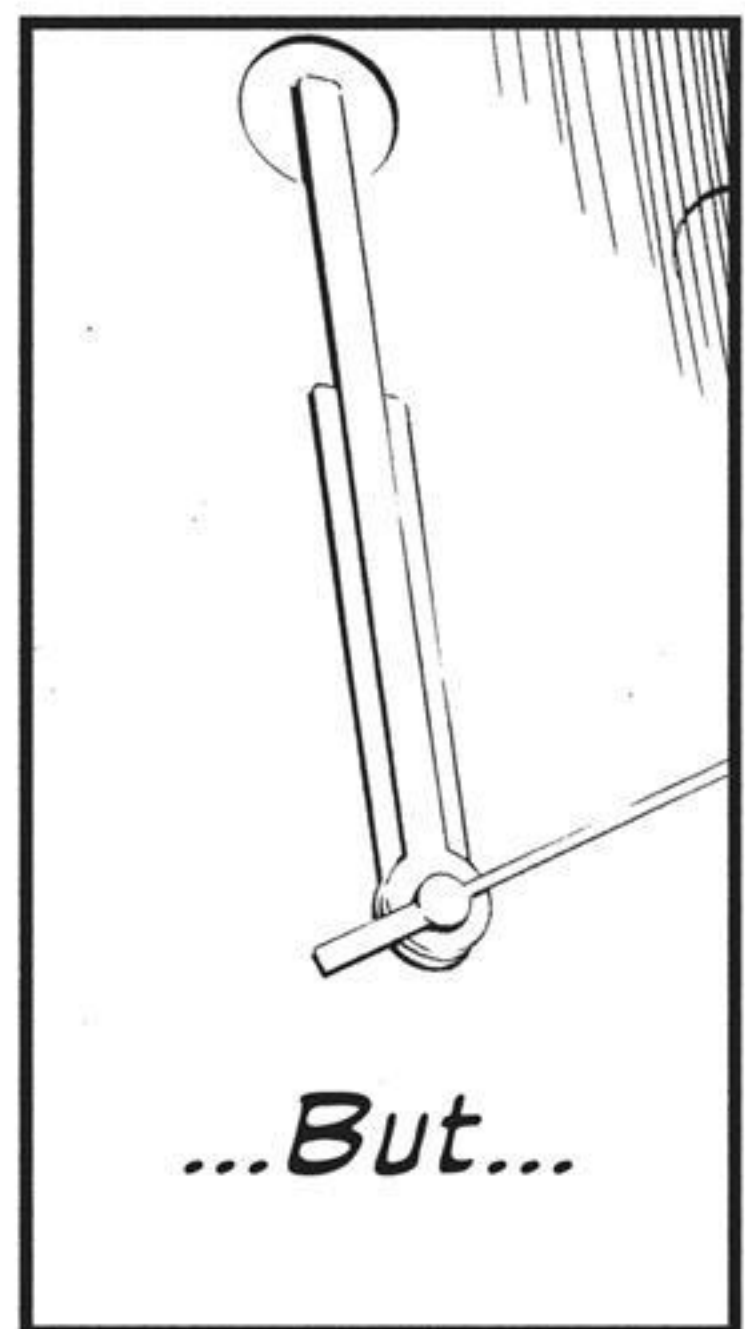
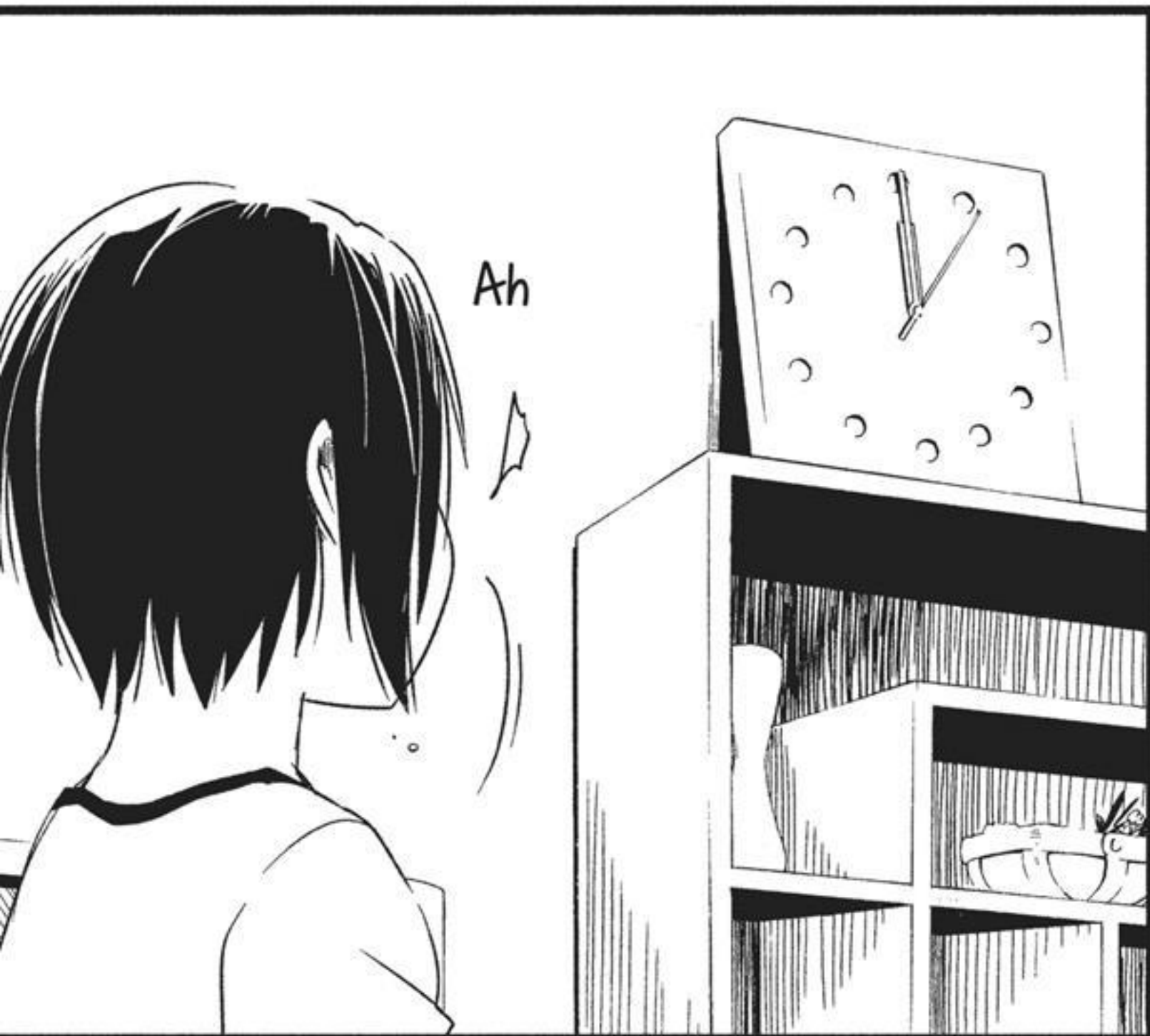
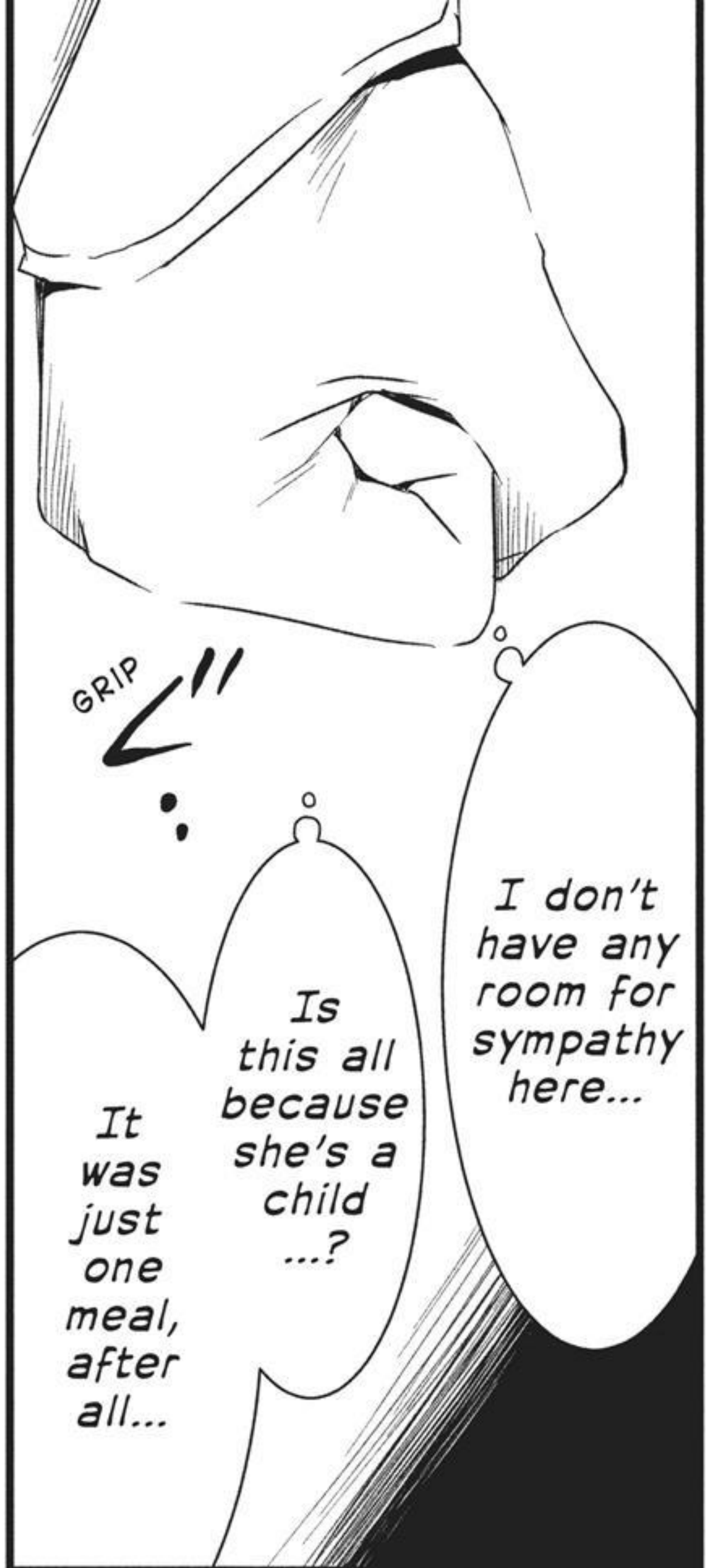
*U's  
committed  
the far  
worse  
crime here,  
abducting  
me and  
imprisoning  
me like  
this....!!*

*No  
....!*

*If  
we're  
talking  
guilt...*

SWOOSH

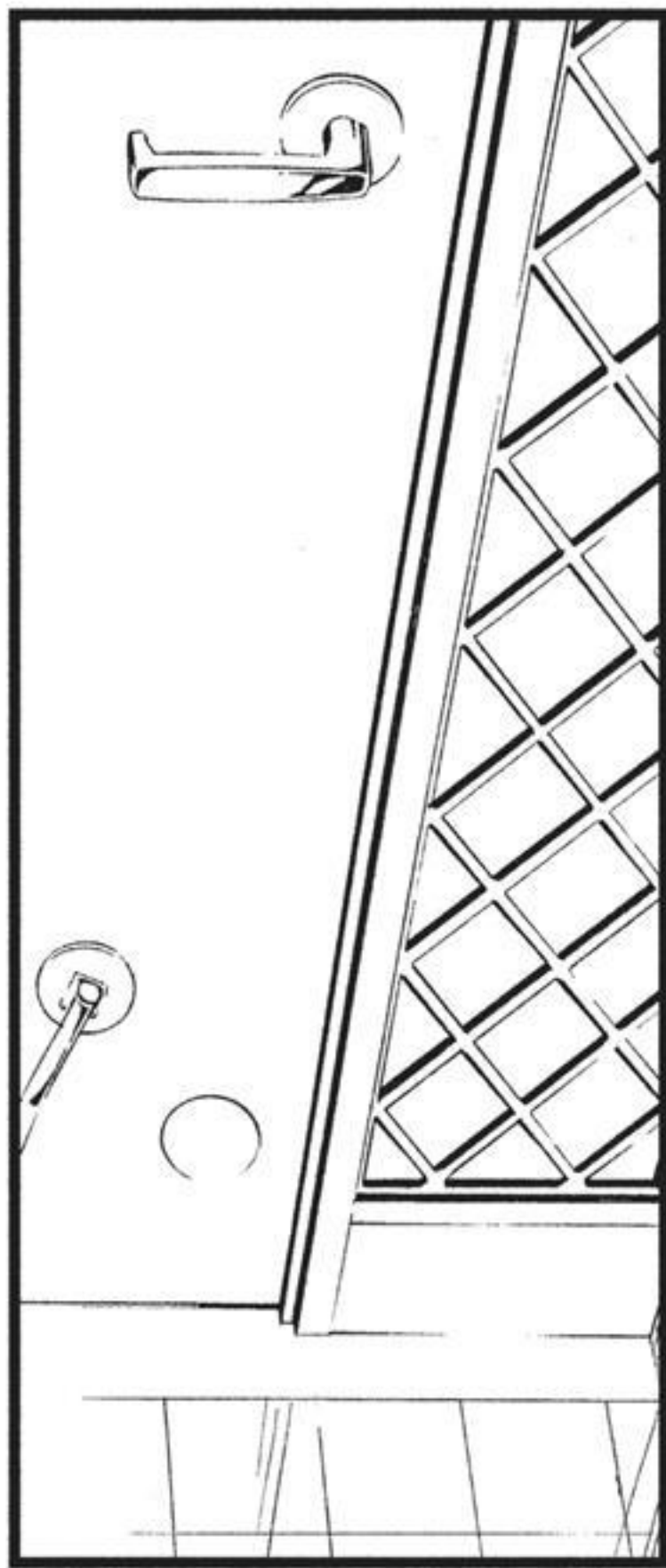




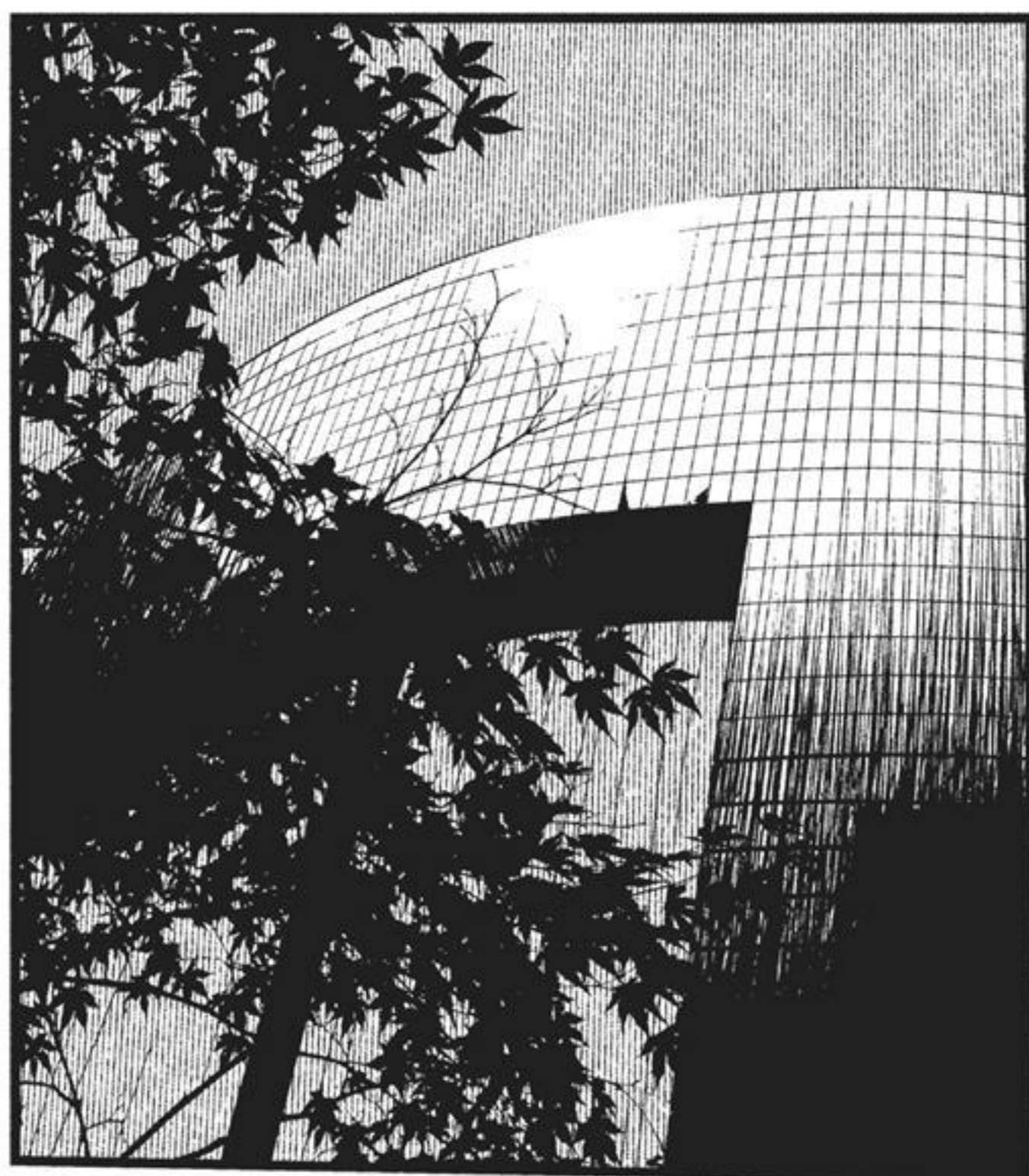




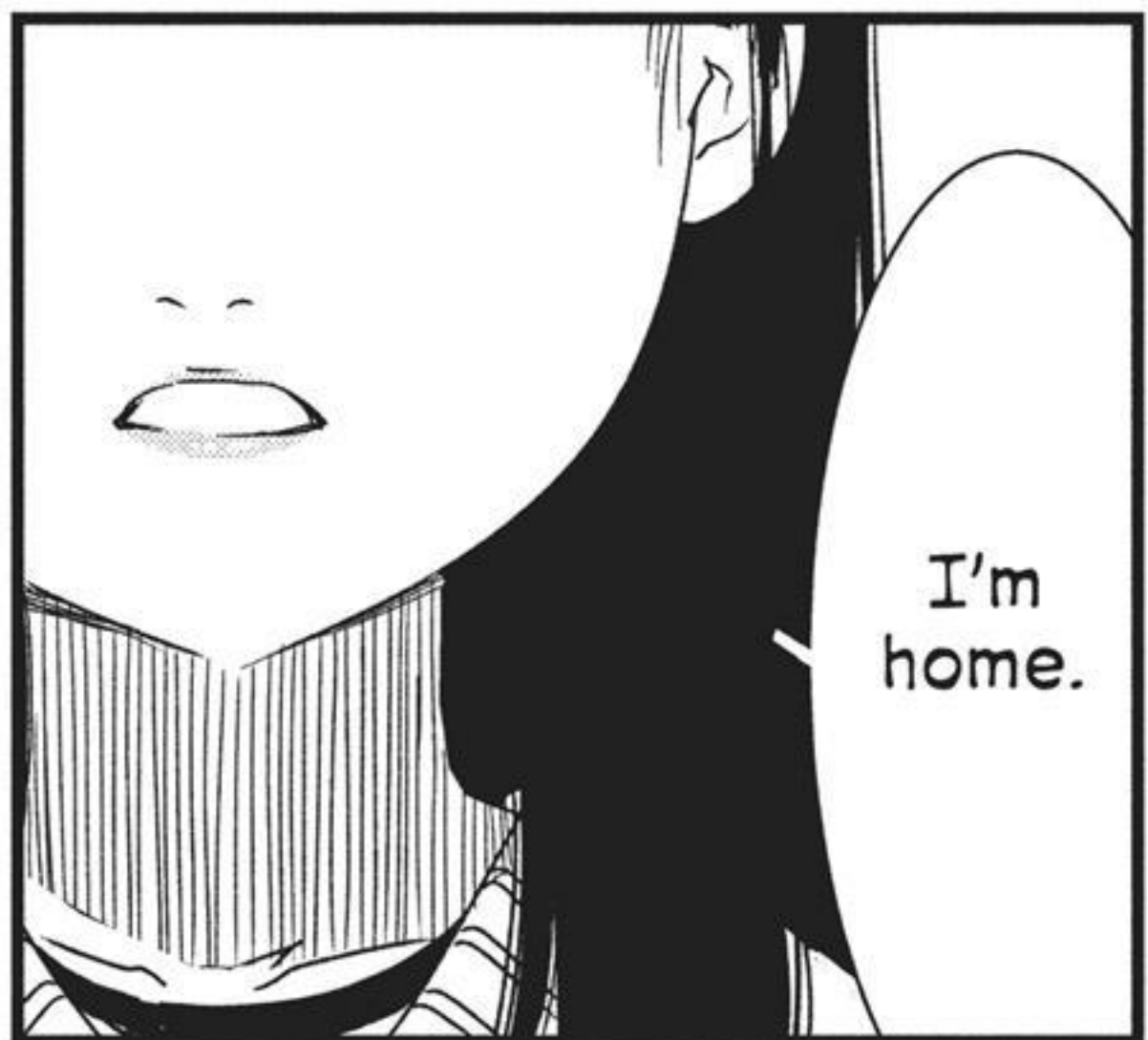
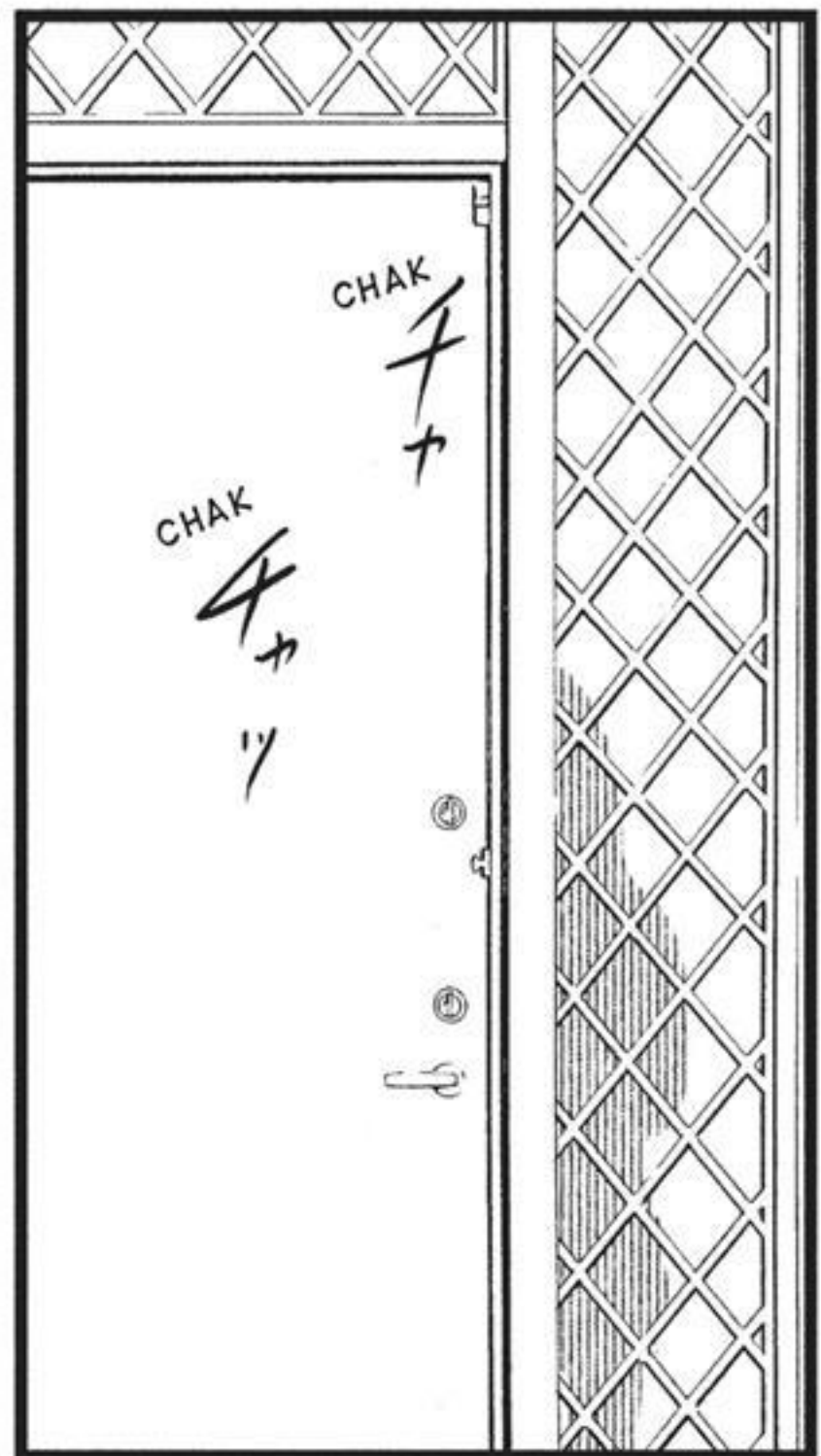




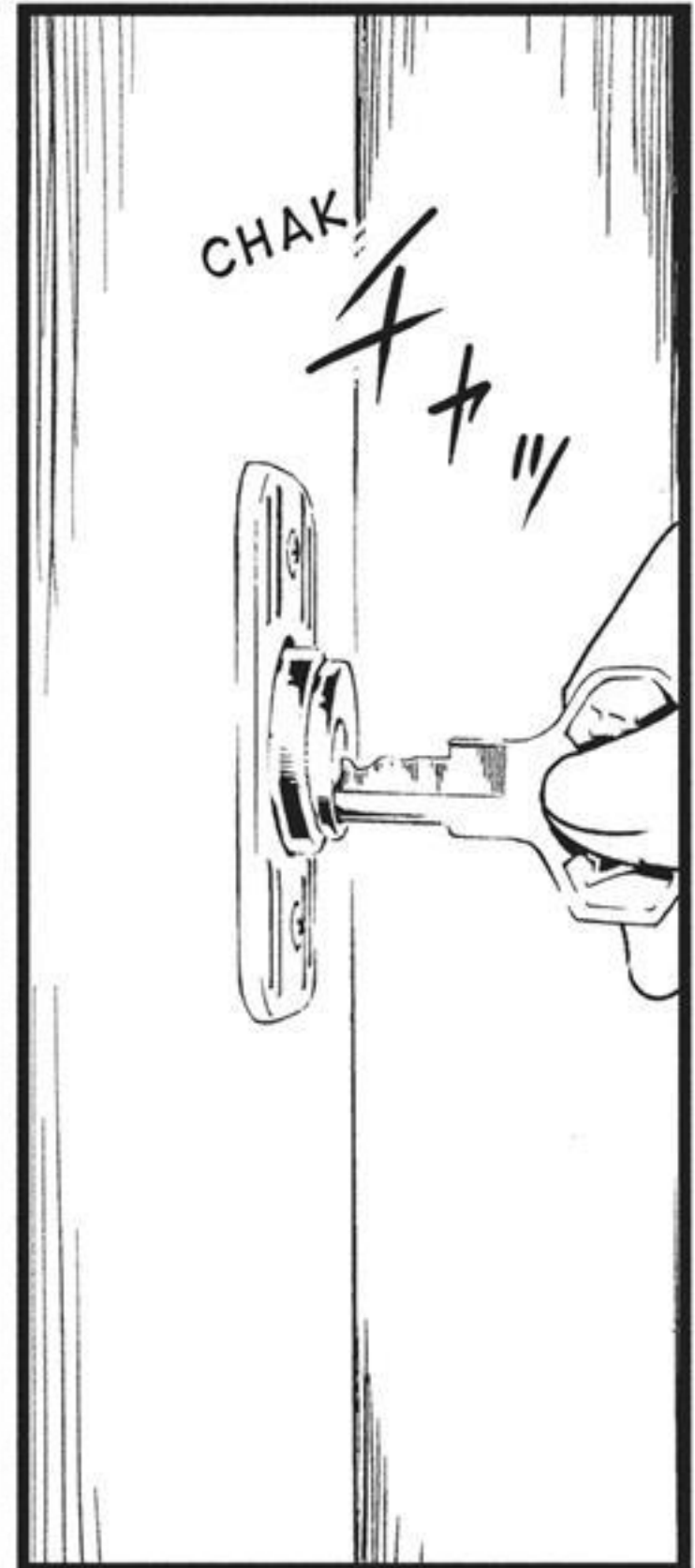




















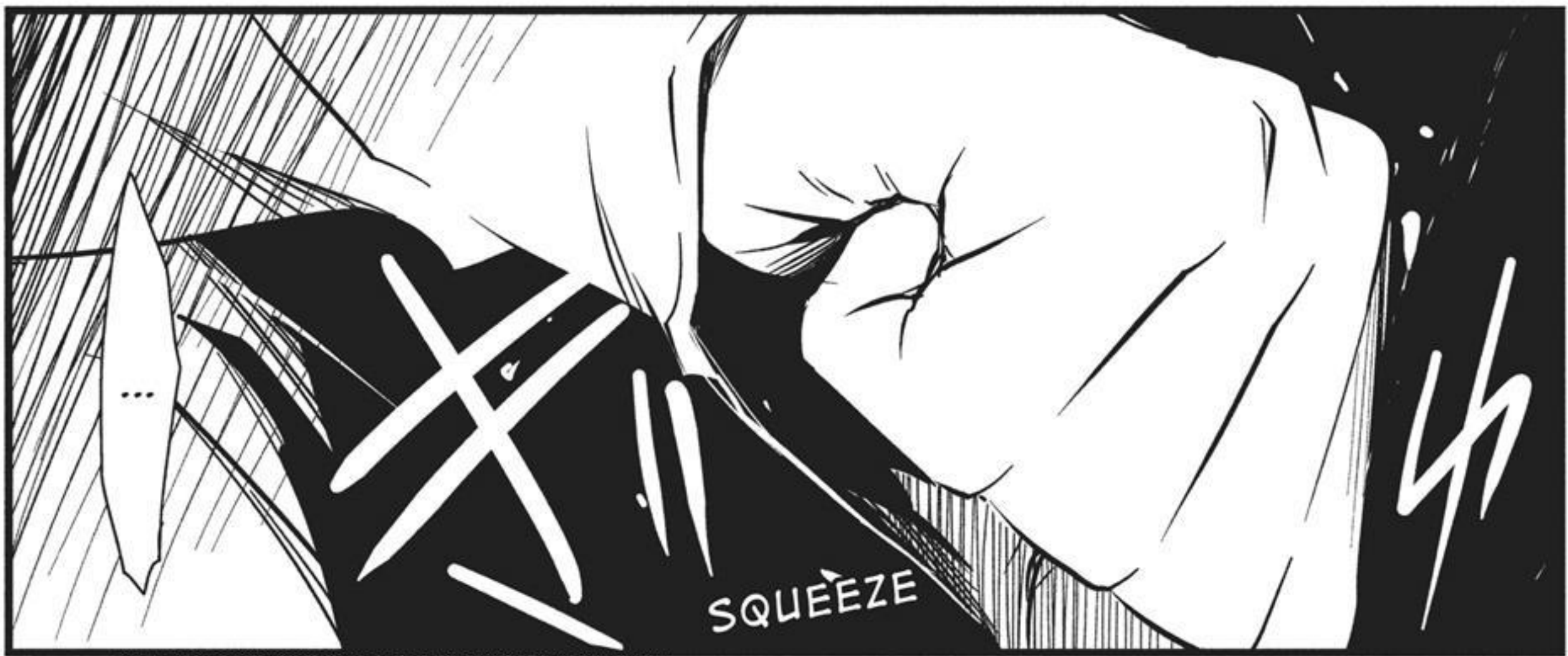
















*for me  
to call it  
an act of  
goodwill.*

*The idea  
was too  
dangerous*




*I might  
end up  
hurting  
her  
pride...*

*If  
I put  
it the  
wrong  
way,*



*Would  
she  
listen  
to me  
if I was  
direct  
about  
it...?*

**"THIS IS  
YOURS,  
SO YOU  
SHOULD  
EAT IT."**

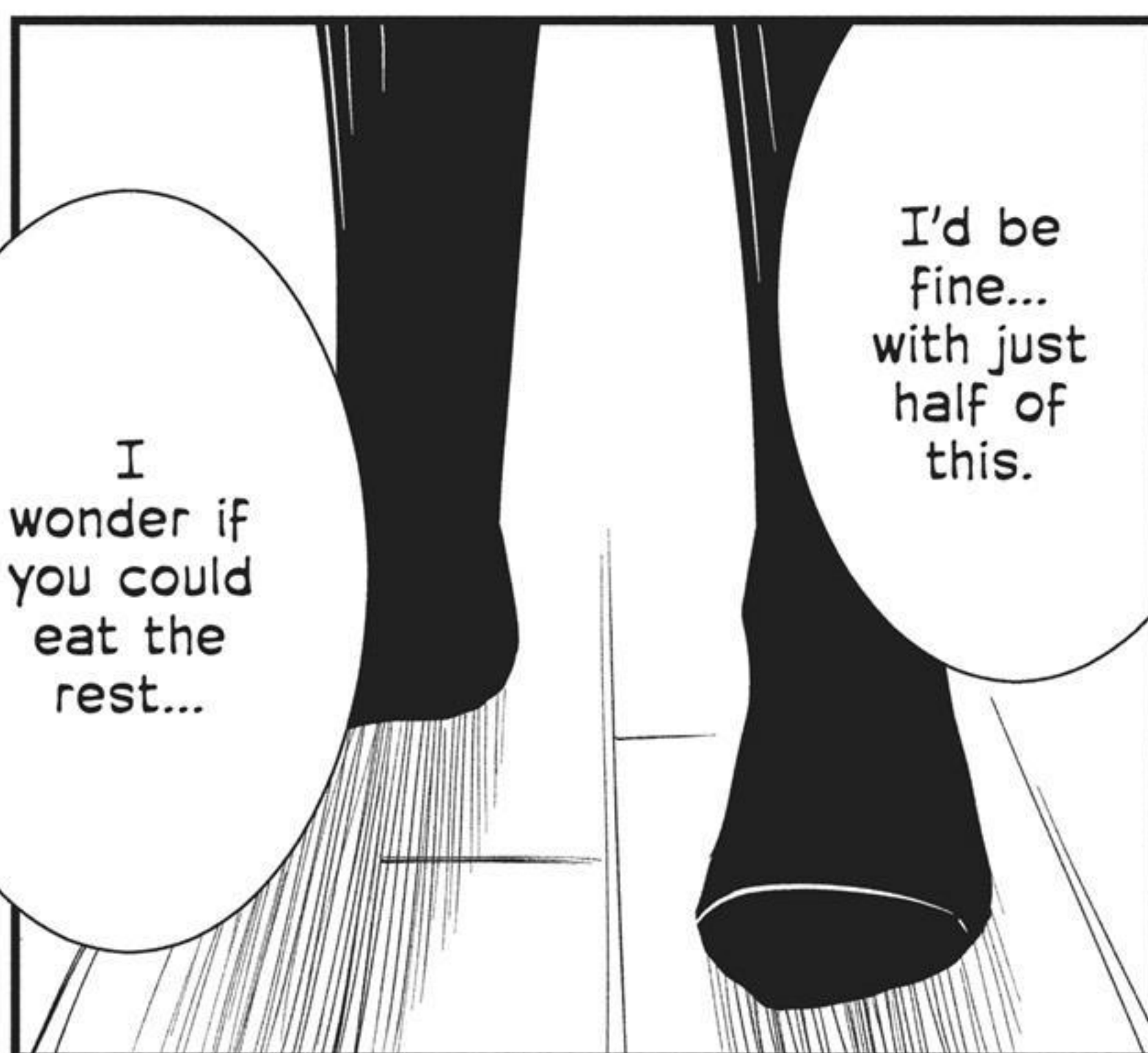
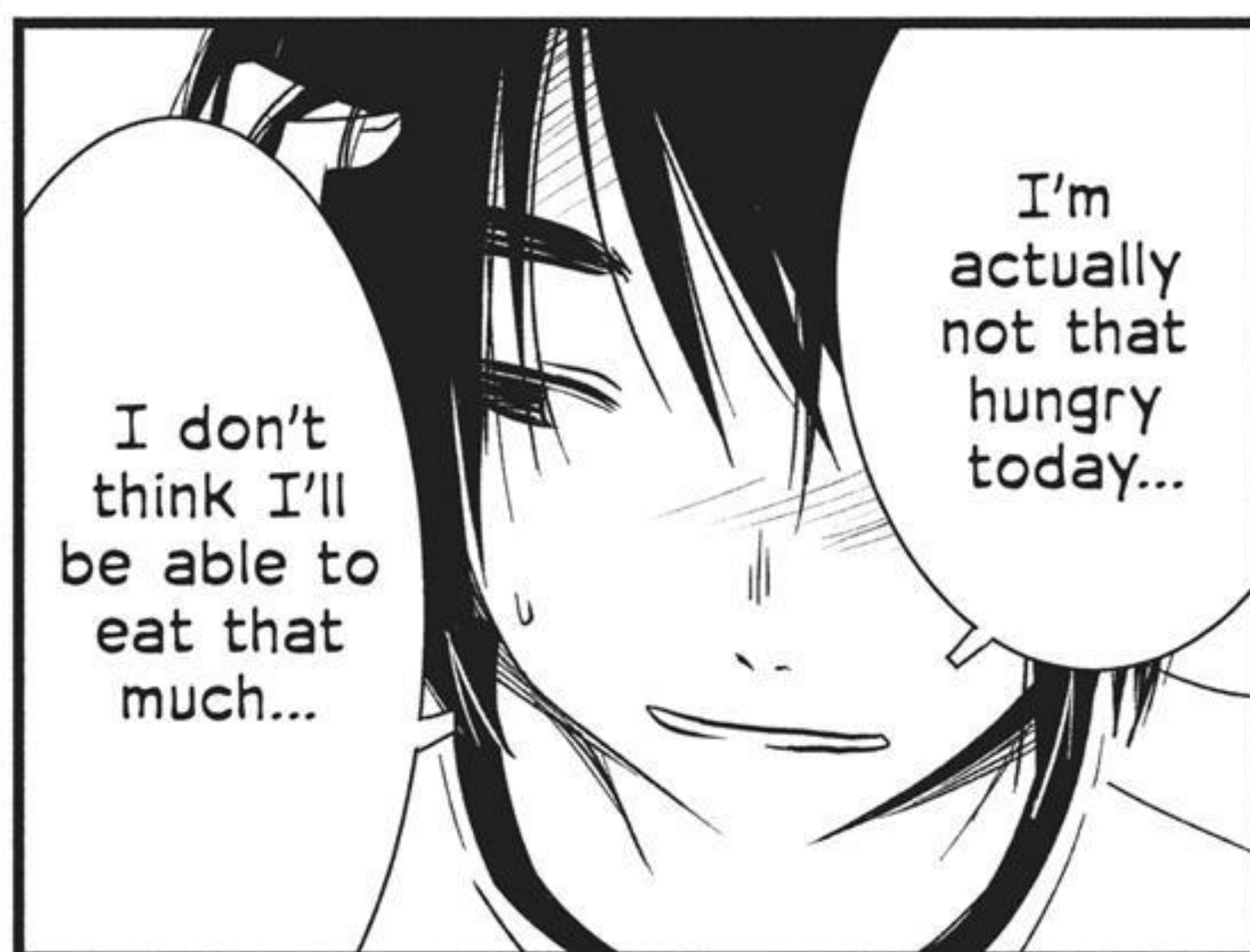


*How  
am I  
sup-  
posed  
to tell  
her...?*





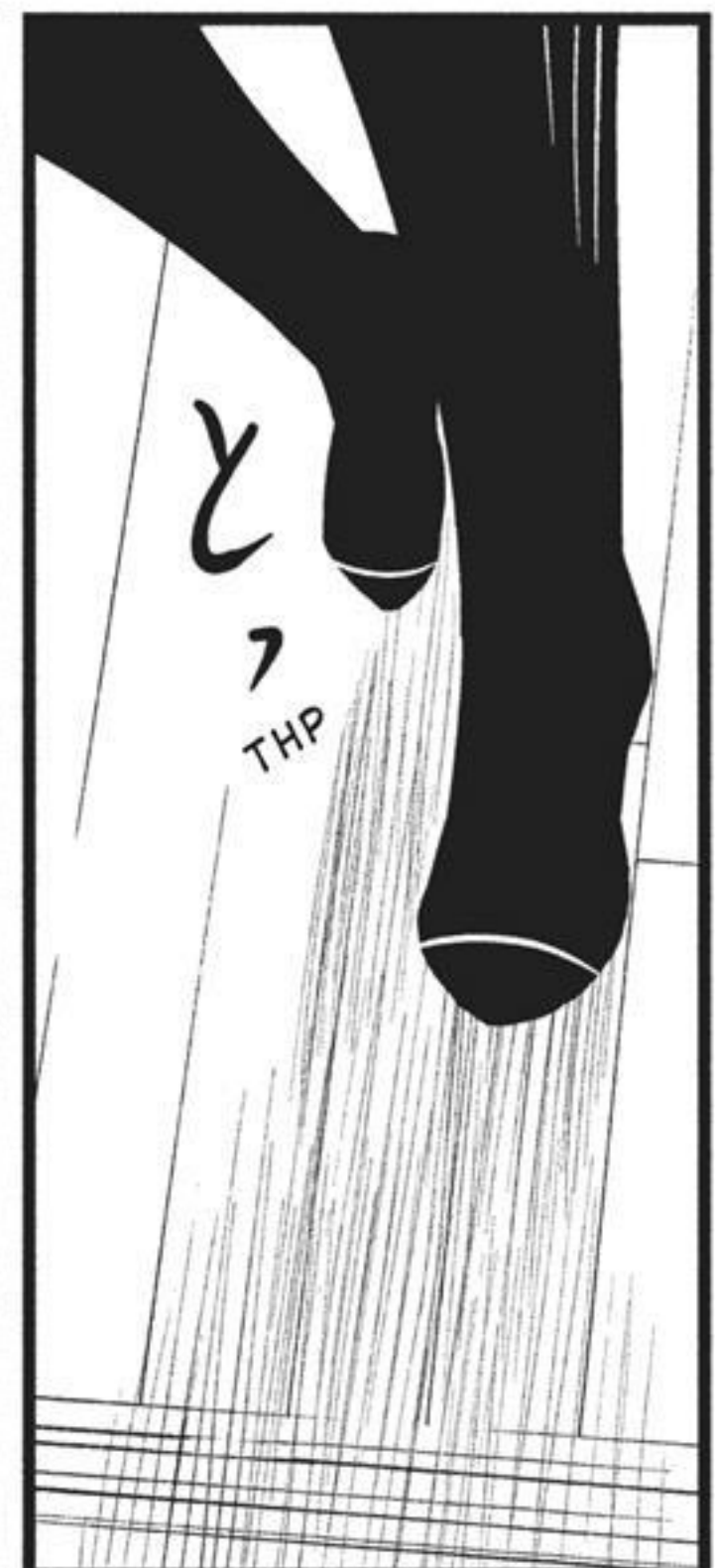
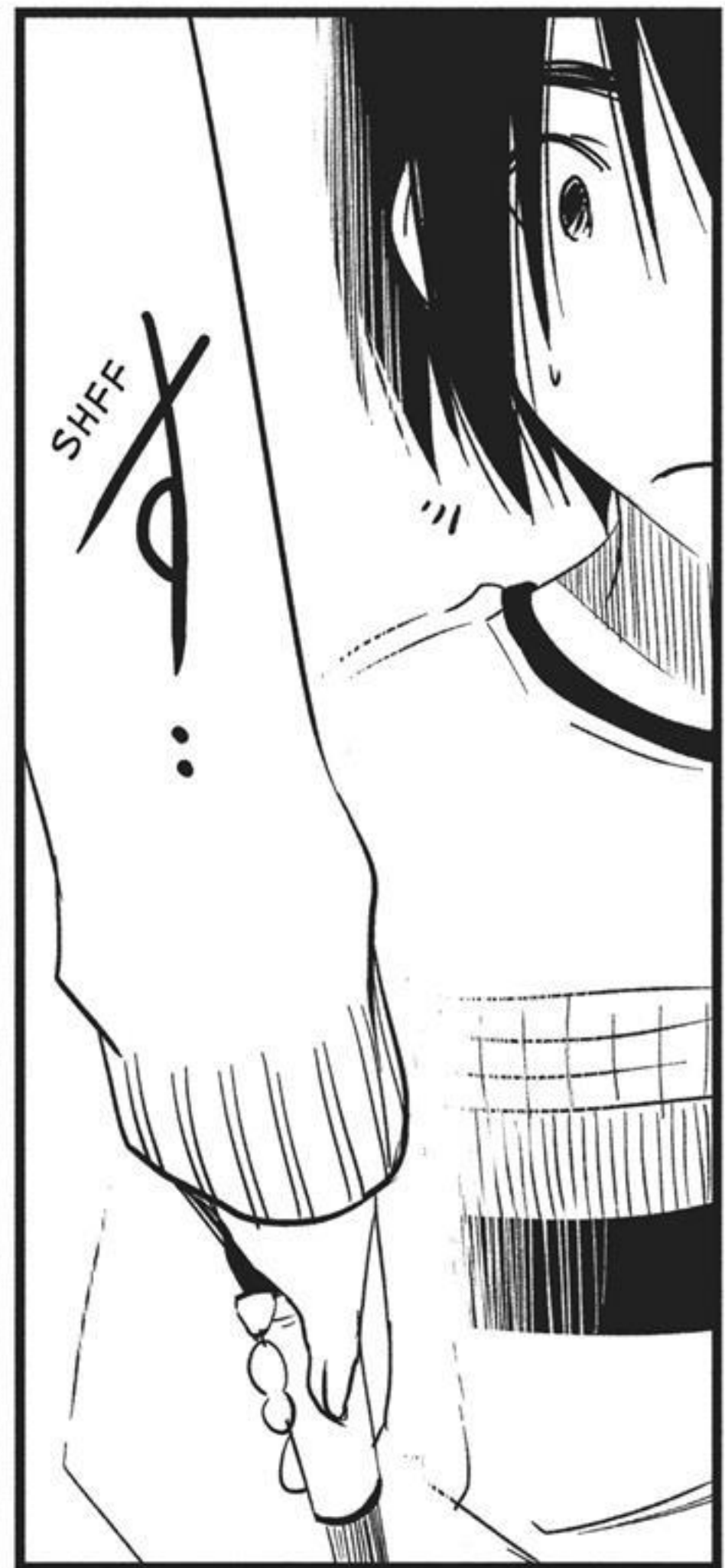
















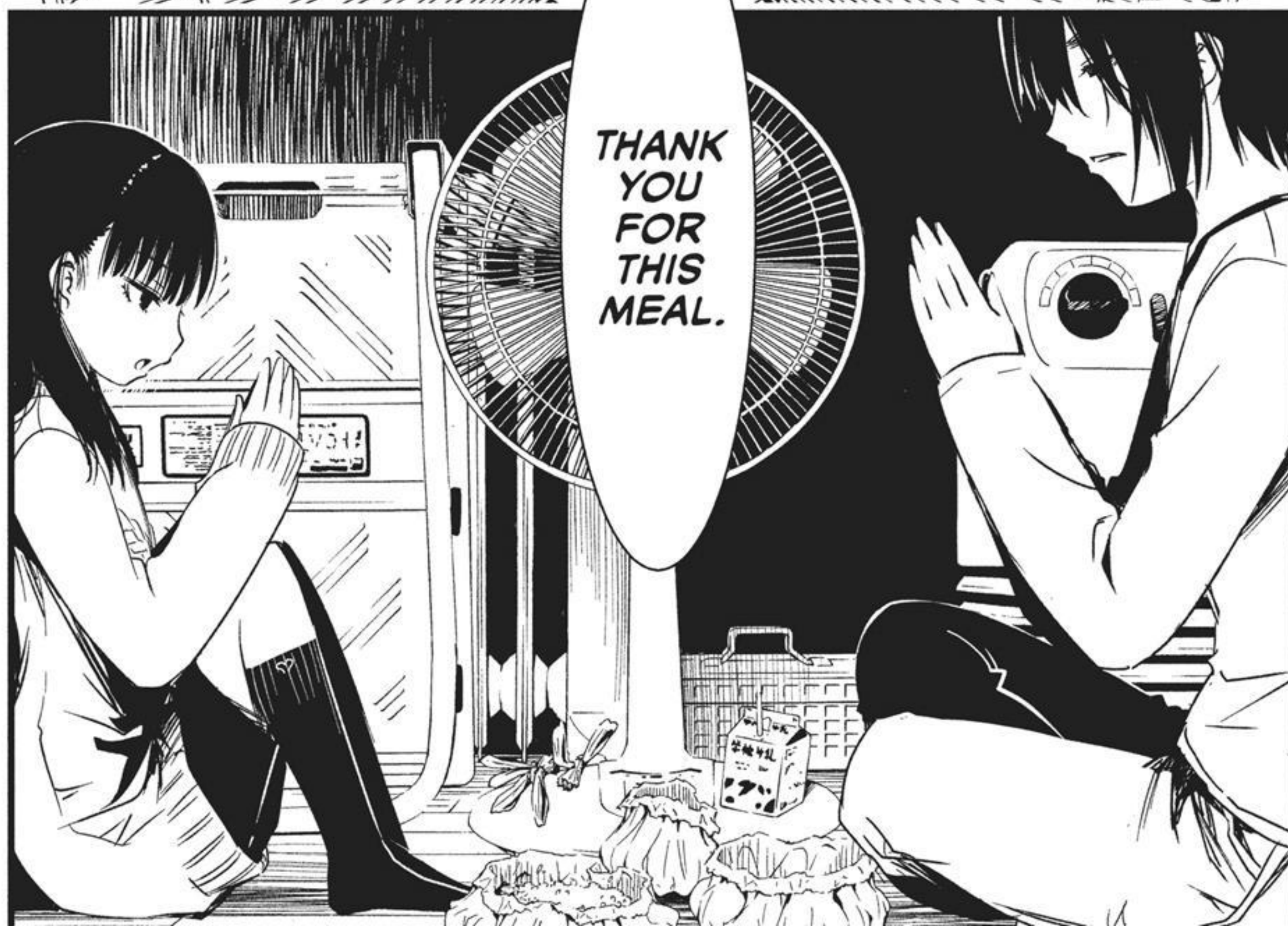
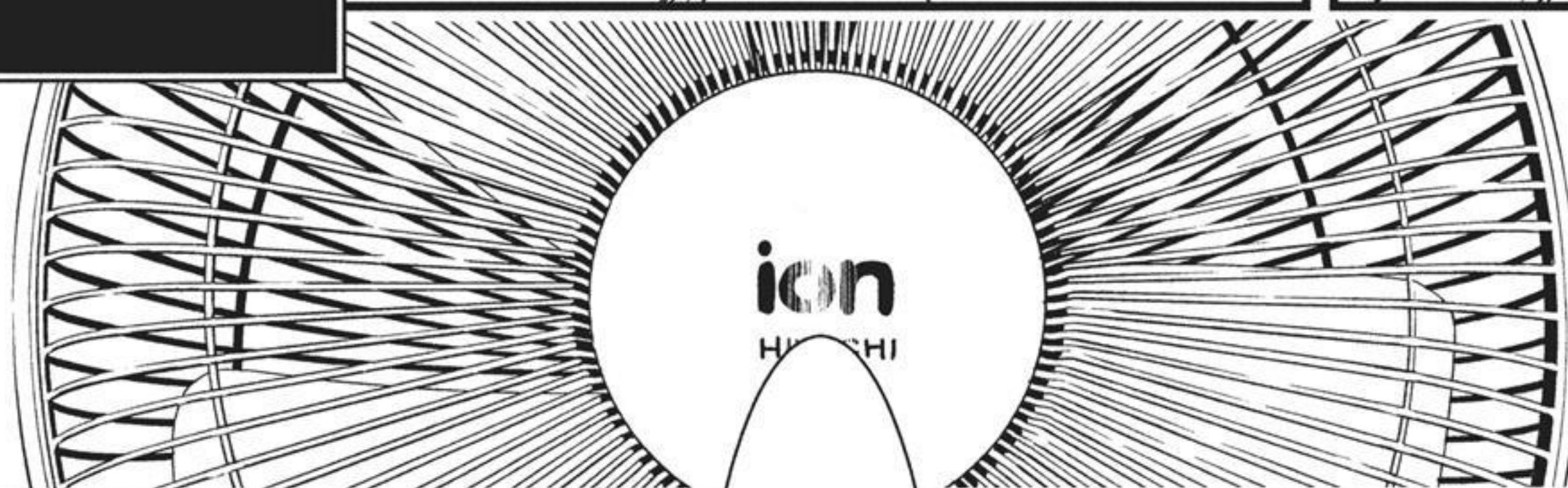


was  
the sense  
that her  
entire value  
system was  
molded

in a  
different  
way from  
regular  
society's,  
as well as  
my own.



But far  
greater  
than  
that























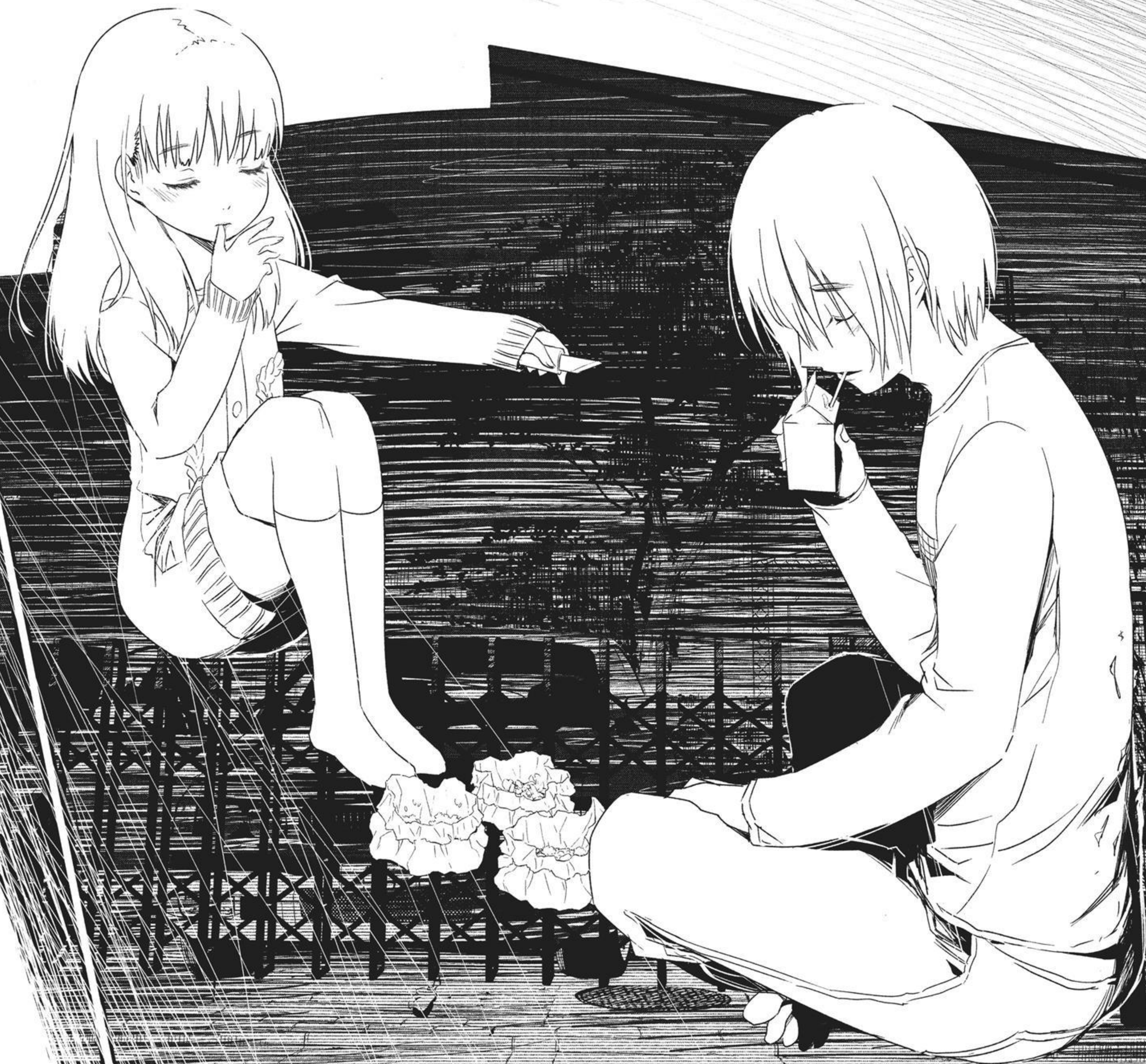


*But...*

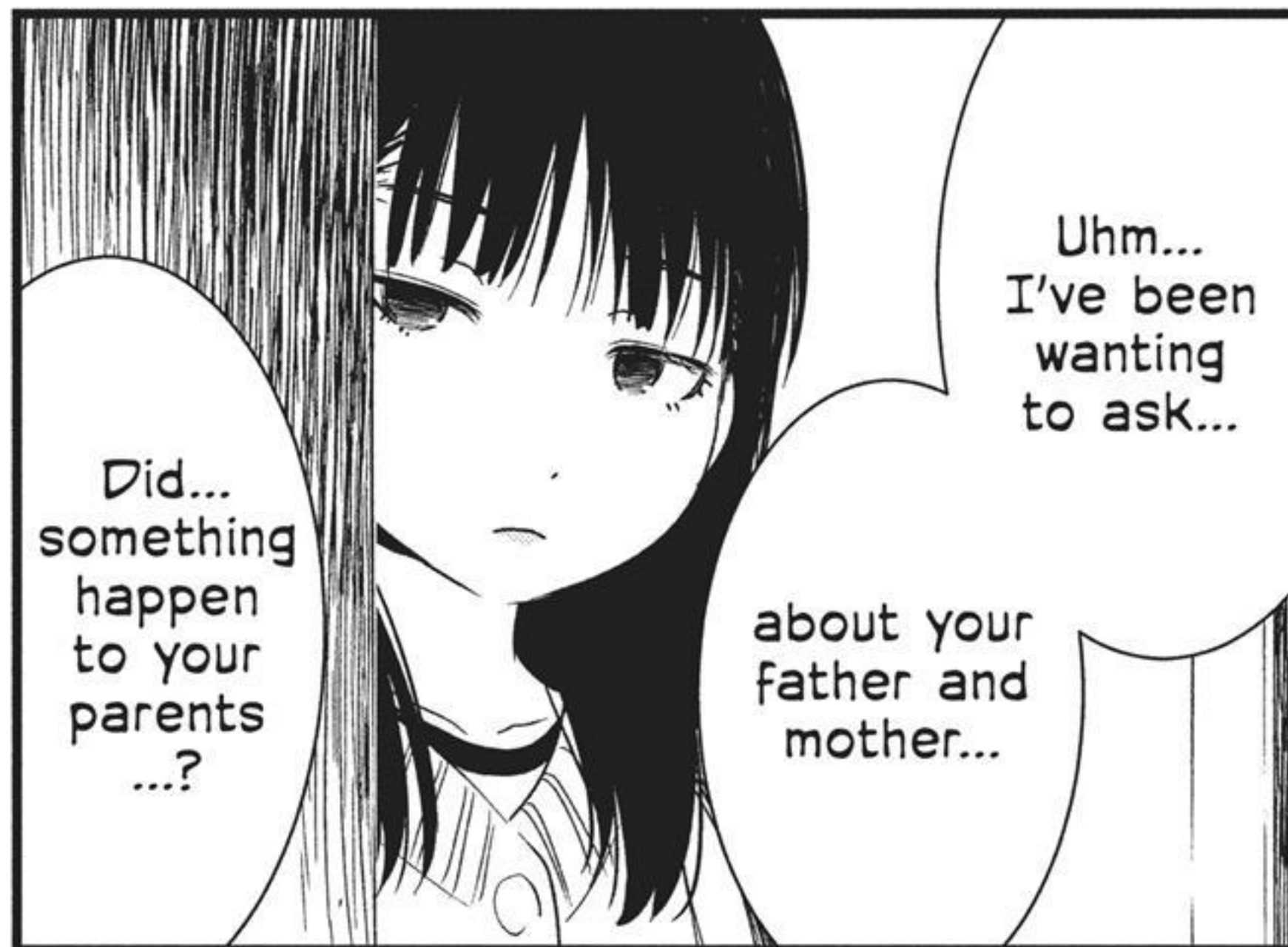
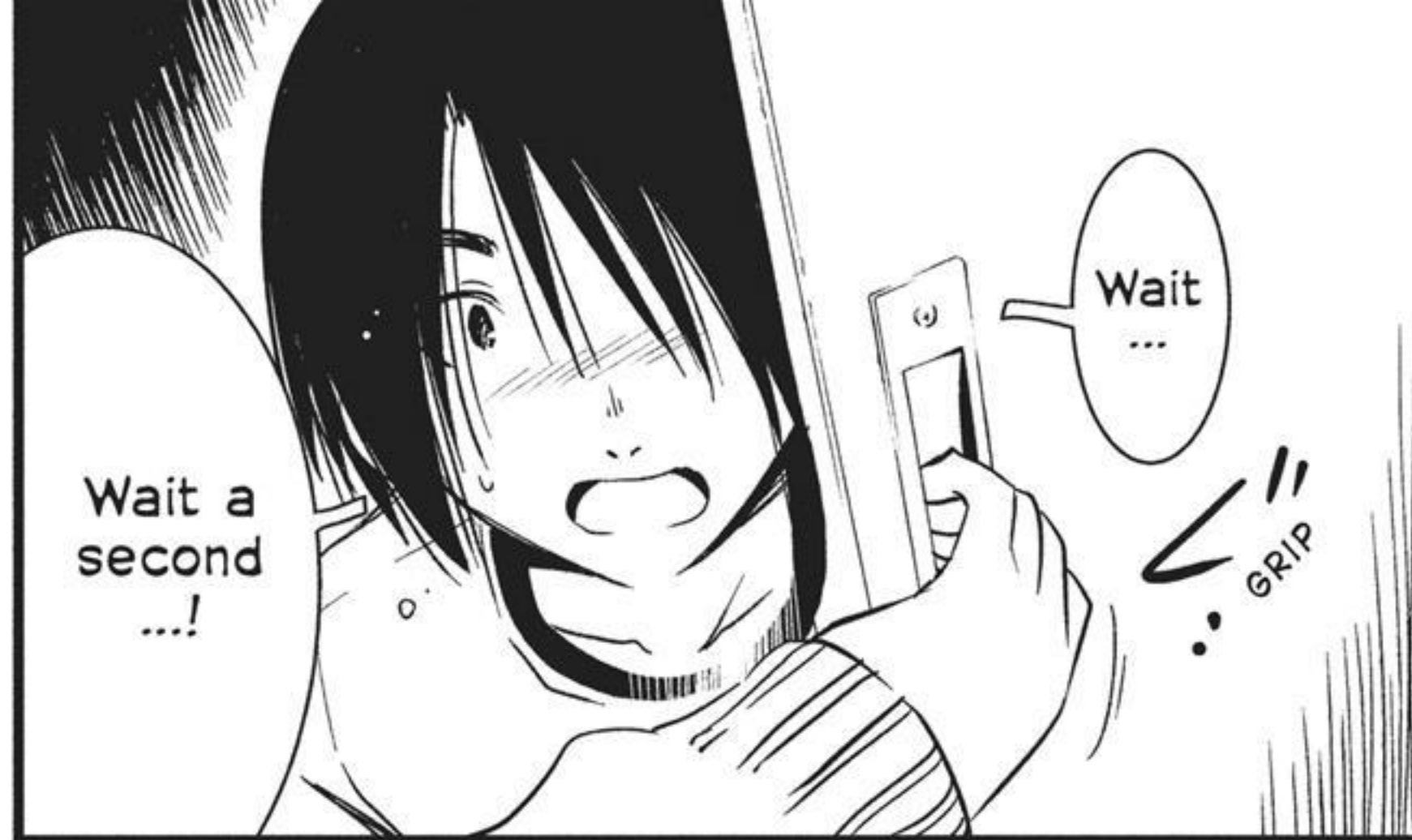
*what  
could her  
parents  
be doing,  
and where  
are they?*

*How  
could  
they  
leave  
this  
child  
on her  
own...?*

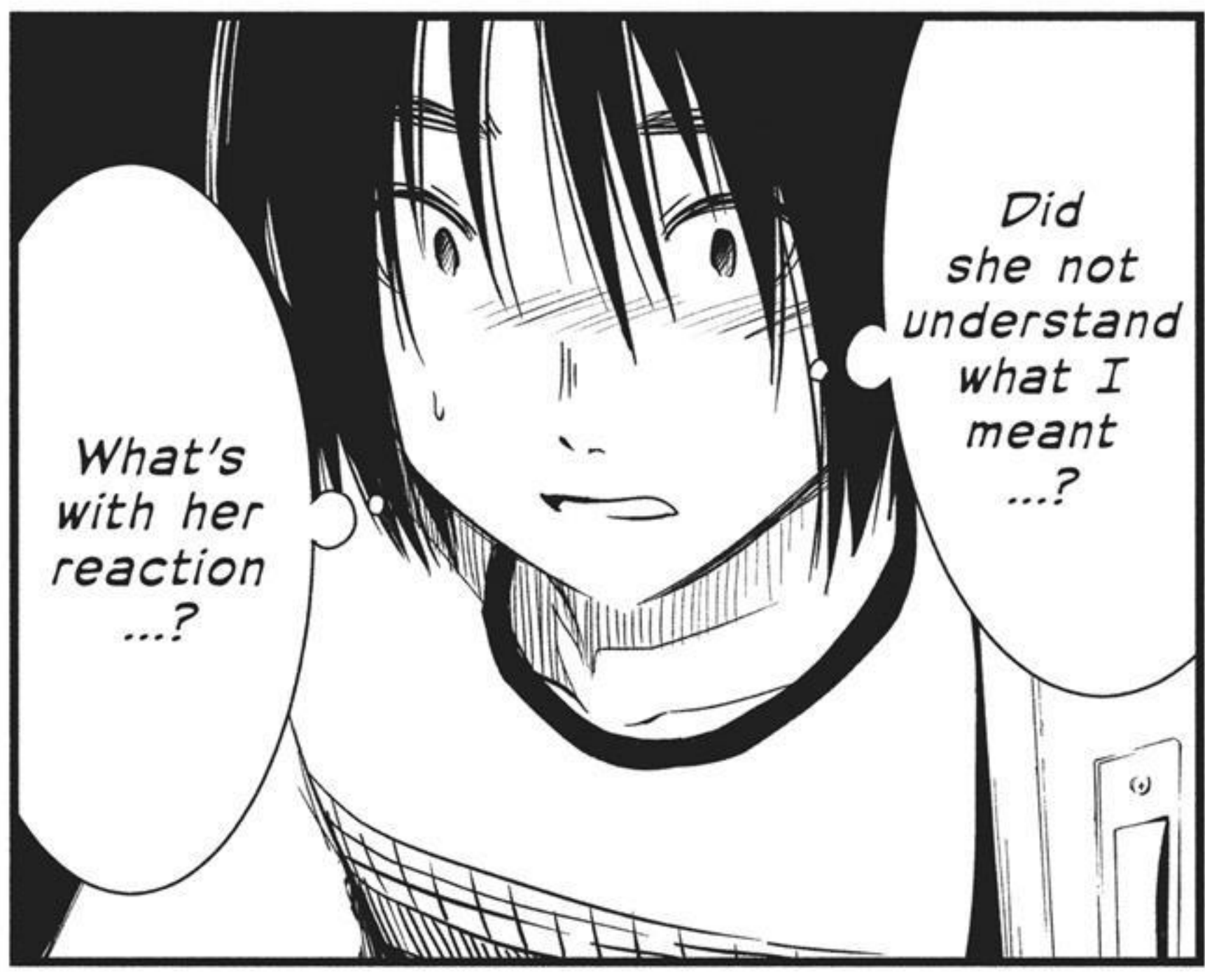
**THANK  
YOU  
FOR  
THE  
FOOD.**











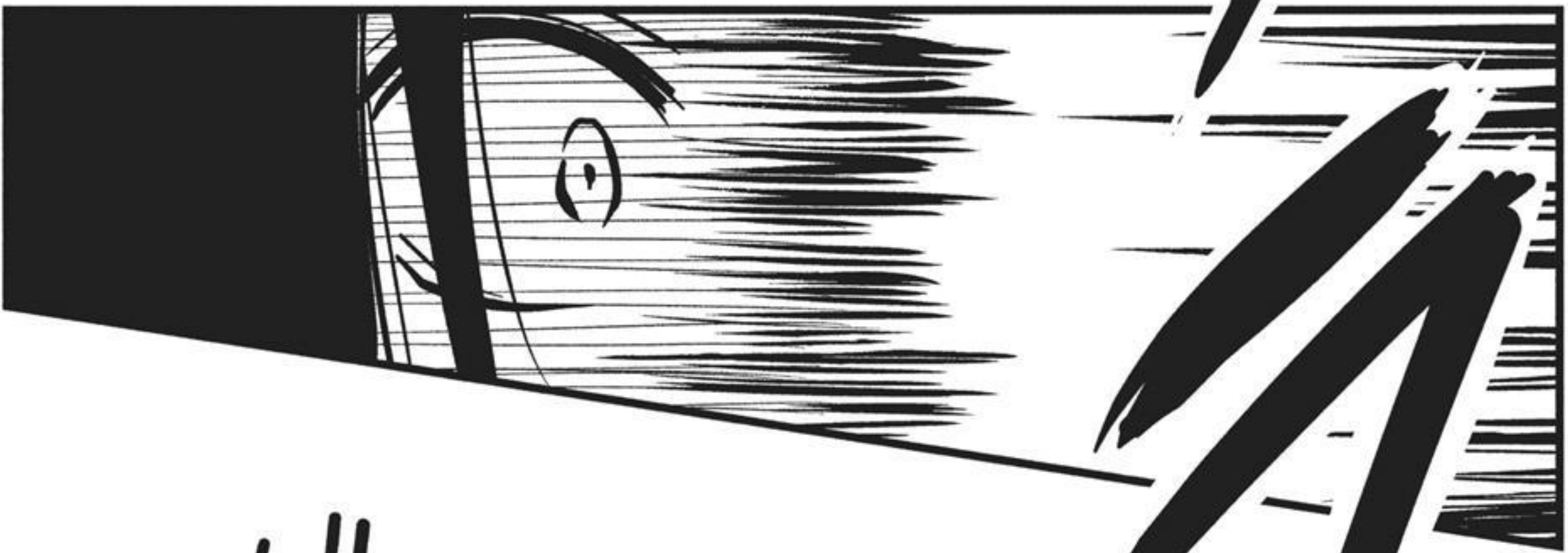




*Mommy  
and  
Daddy*

*went  
away.*





ハ  
4  
+  
ニ  
GACHIK

Went  
away  
...?













*went  
away.*







*That they  
left and  
won't be  
coming  
back...?*

*What  
does  
that  
mean  
...?*



*Or...*

*could  
she  
actually  
mean  
they...  
died?*

*No  
...*



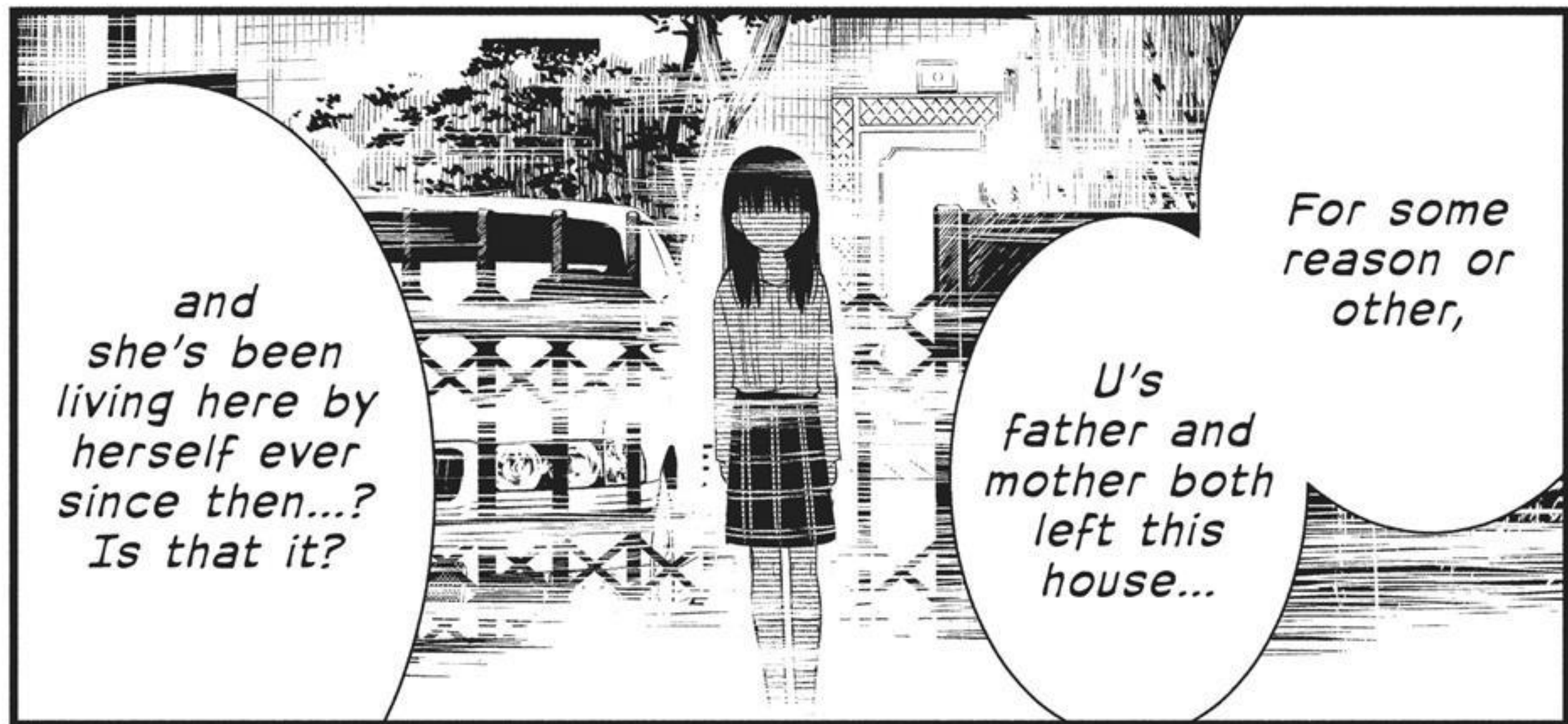
*"They  
have  
gone  
away."*





*This is Japan.  
It should be a pretty big deal when people die...*

*Now that's a thought that only comes from reading too many mystery novels...*



*and she's been living here by herself ever since then...? Is that it?*

*For some reason or other,*

*U's father and mother both left this house...*



*I'll leave this closet again and search the house...*

*Once I see U off to school,*



...

*Tomorrow.*





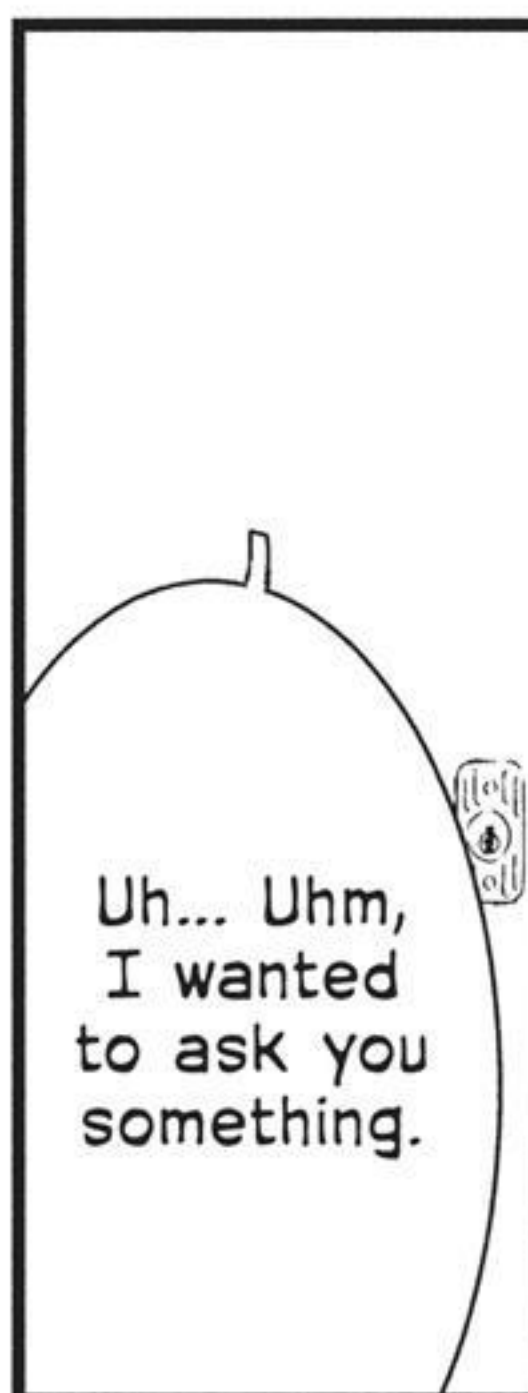




## Day 4 of Imprisonment



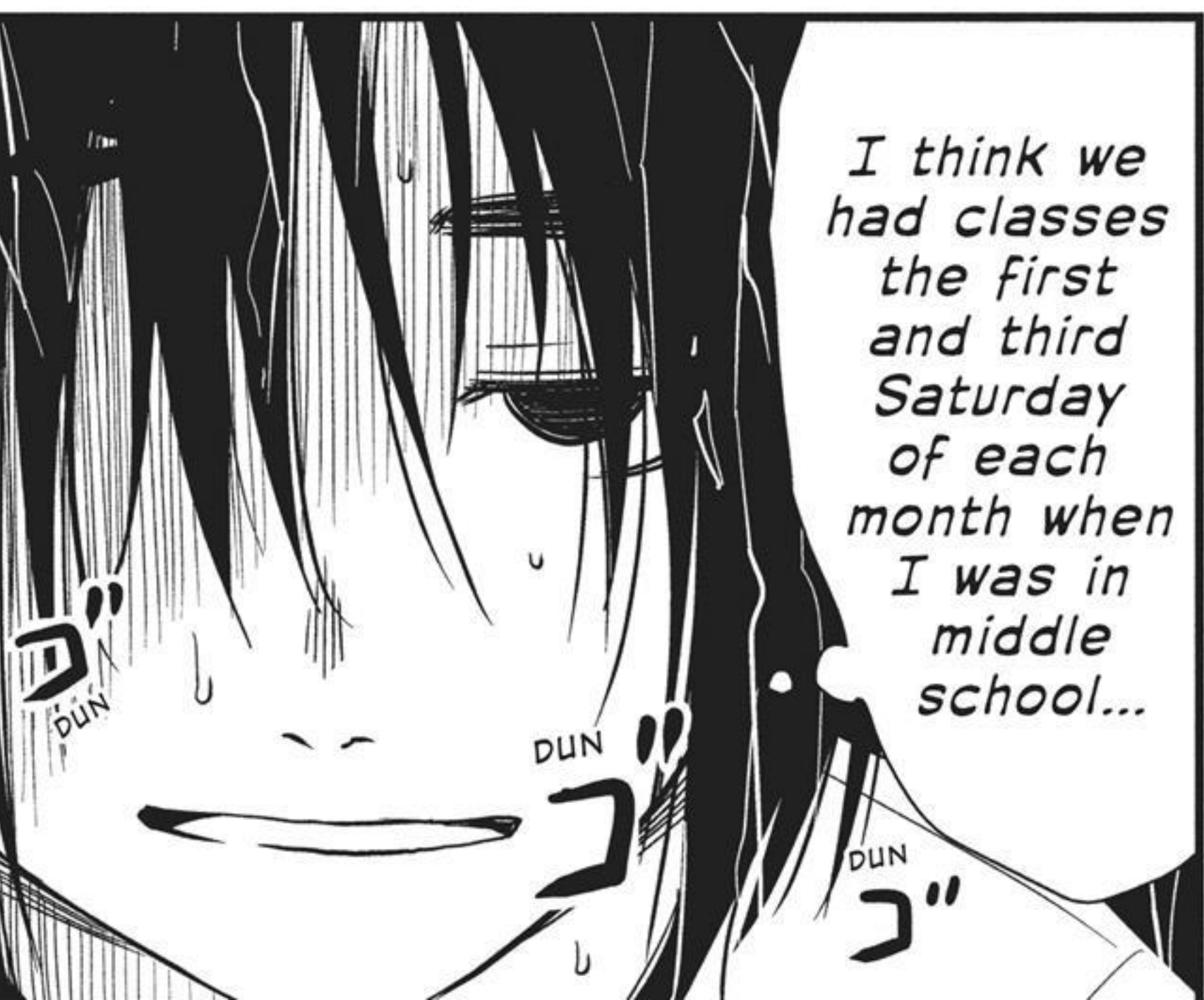








**but  
students  
now  
have  
every  
weekend  
off.**



*I think we  
had classes  
the first  
and third  
Saturday  
of each  
month when  
I was in  
middle  
school...*





I won't  
be able to  
move around  
Sunday,  
either...

~~~~~  
SIGH

My plans  
for today  
were ruined,  
just like  
that...



I  
should  
be  
worried  
about  
right  
now...

Is  
that  
all?

that  
isn't  
what

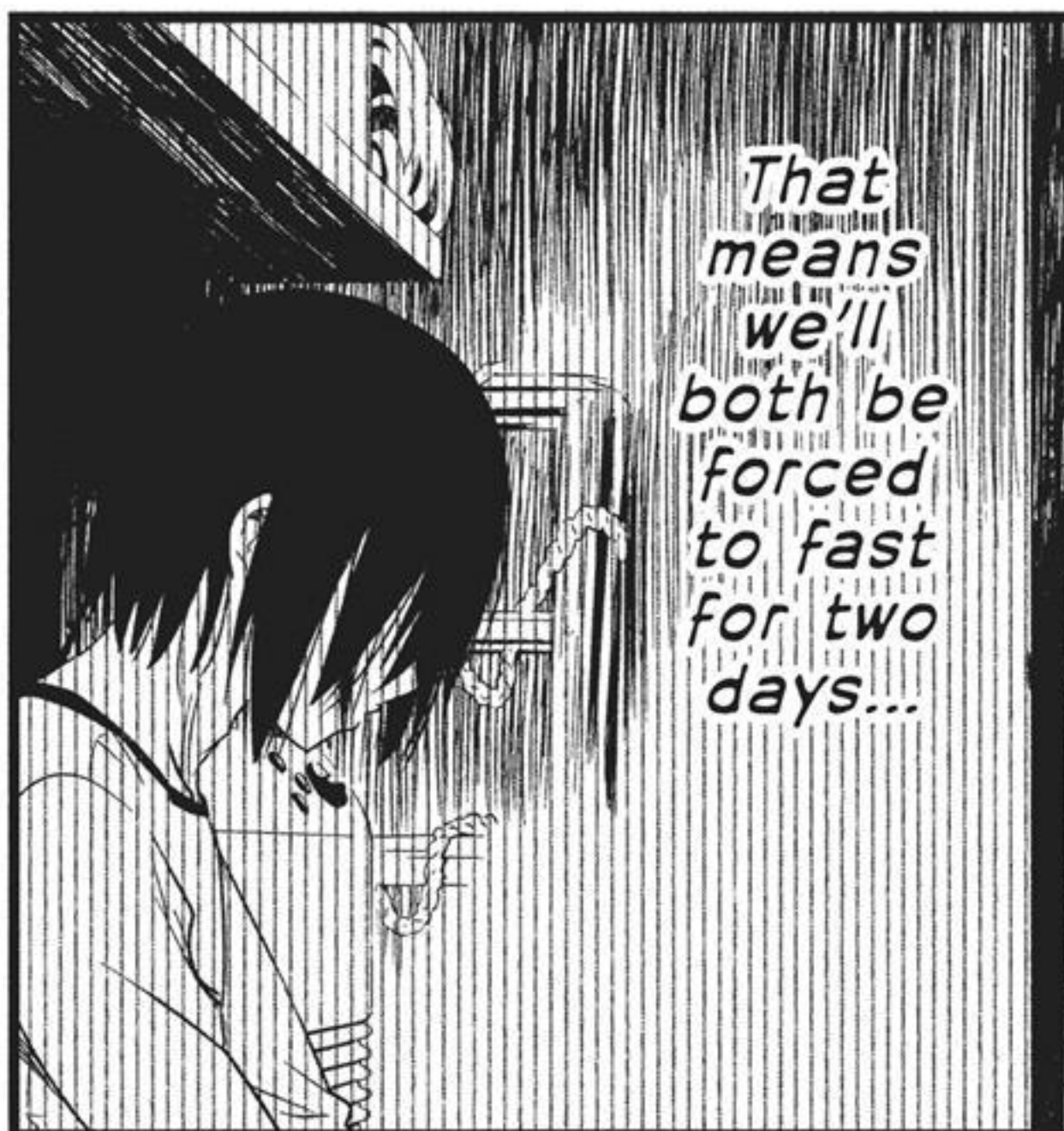
But...



I  
need to  
worry  
about  
food.

That's  
right...





*That means we'll both be forced to fast for two days...*



*Obviously, she can't bring home any of her school lunches on days she doesn't go to school.*



*And every weekend after that, too.*

*I need to do something to fix her food situation this weekend.*

*In any case...*



*How did U get through last weekend ...?*

*Then again, I don't know whether or not her parents had "gone away" by then.*



*Hey ...*

*There's something I want to ask you to do for me.*





Oh,  
don't  
get me  
wrong  
...!



Uhm...  
I want  
you to go  
shopping  
for me...



I would  
ever have a  
chance to  
actually use  
this 10,000  
yen bill.



You can  
use...  
please  
use my  
money!!

Who'd  
have  
thought





So I'd  
usually  
do my  
best

to split up  
any cash  
I carry  
on me.

twist...



but I'm  
a very  
careful  
person.

I realize this  
doesn't sound  
very credible  
coming from  
me, given the  
situation you're  
seeing me in,



what  
might  
happen  
in life  
...

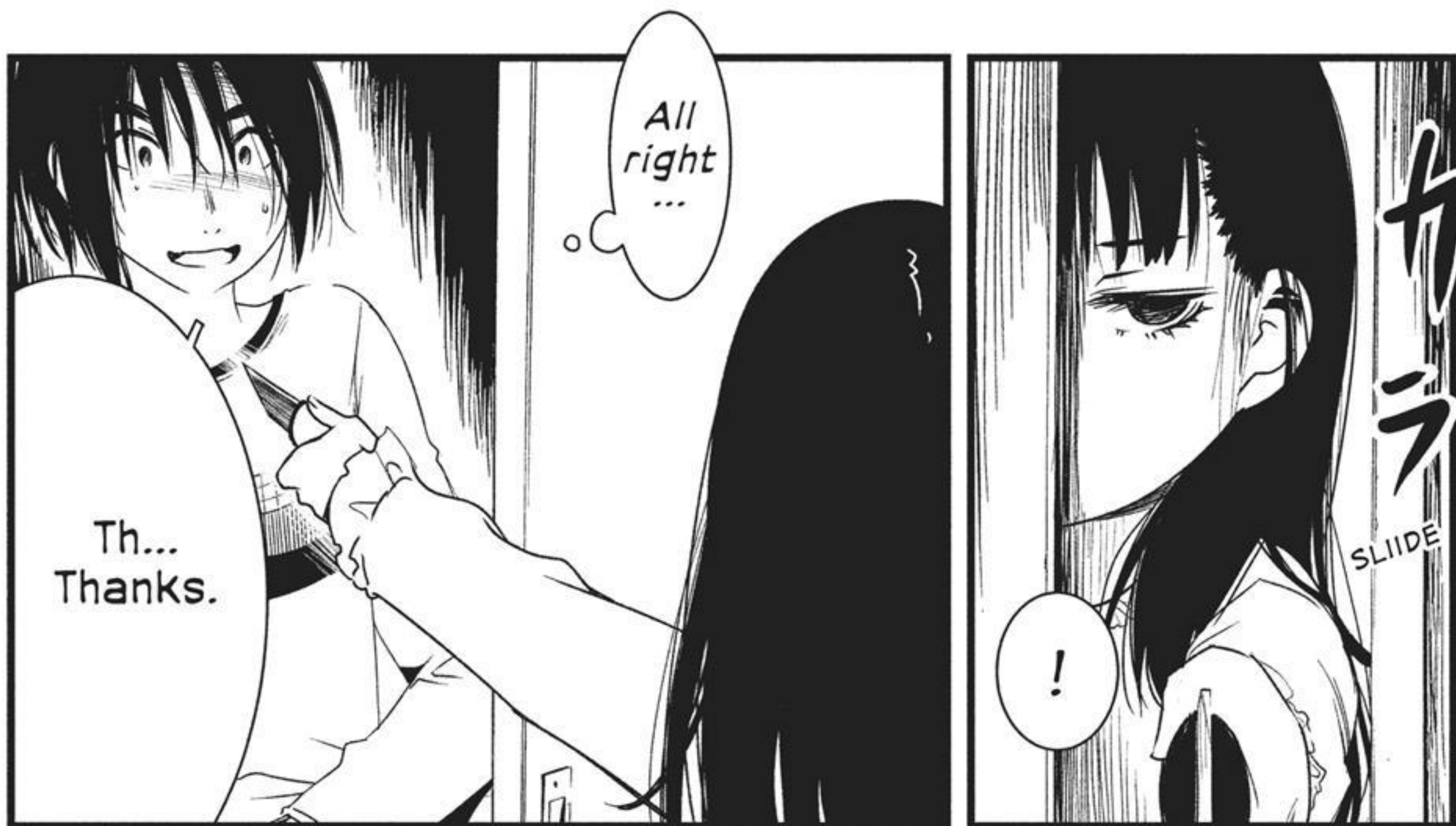
You  
never  
know

SLIP  
~



SHKK  
~









What  
is it  
...?

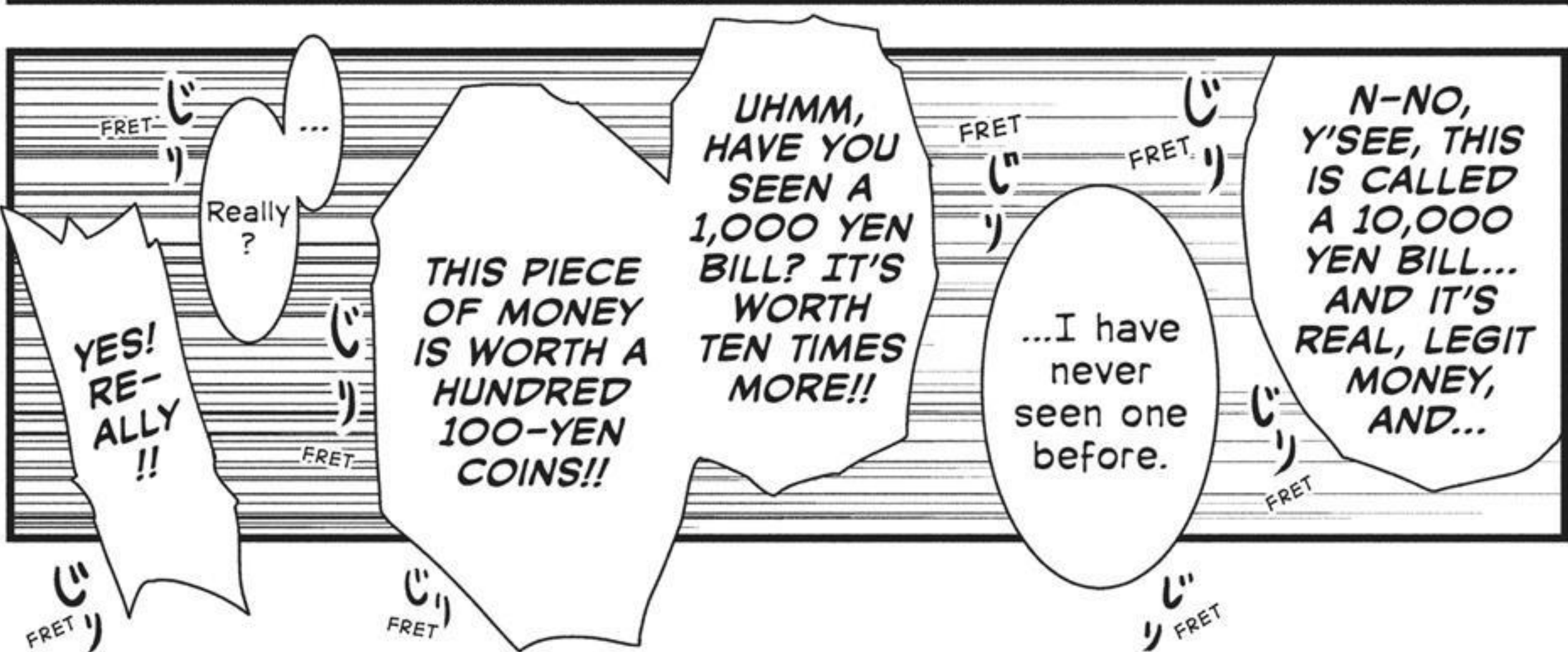


That  
paper  
...

じり  
り  
:  
STARE



*This girl...*  
**doesn't know what a  
10,000 yen bill is.**



YES!  
RE-  
ALLY  
!!

Really  
?

THIS PIECE  
OF MONEY  
IS WORTH A  
HUNDRED  
100-YEN  
COINS!!

UHMM,  
HAVE YOU  
SEEN A  
1,000 YEN  
BILL? IT'S  
WORTH  
TEN TIMES  
MORE!!

...I have  
never  
seen one  
before.

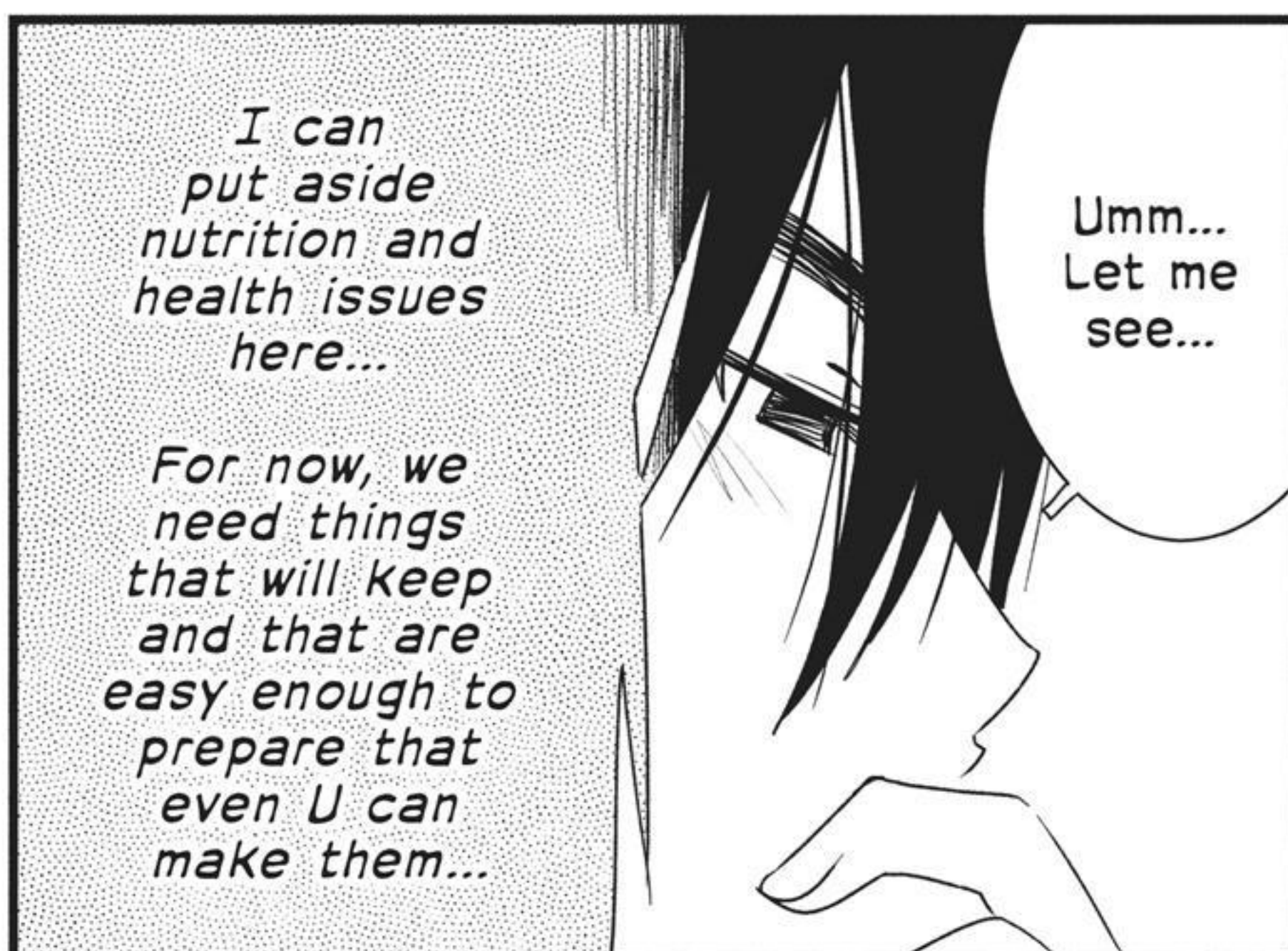
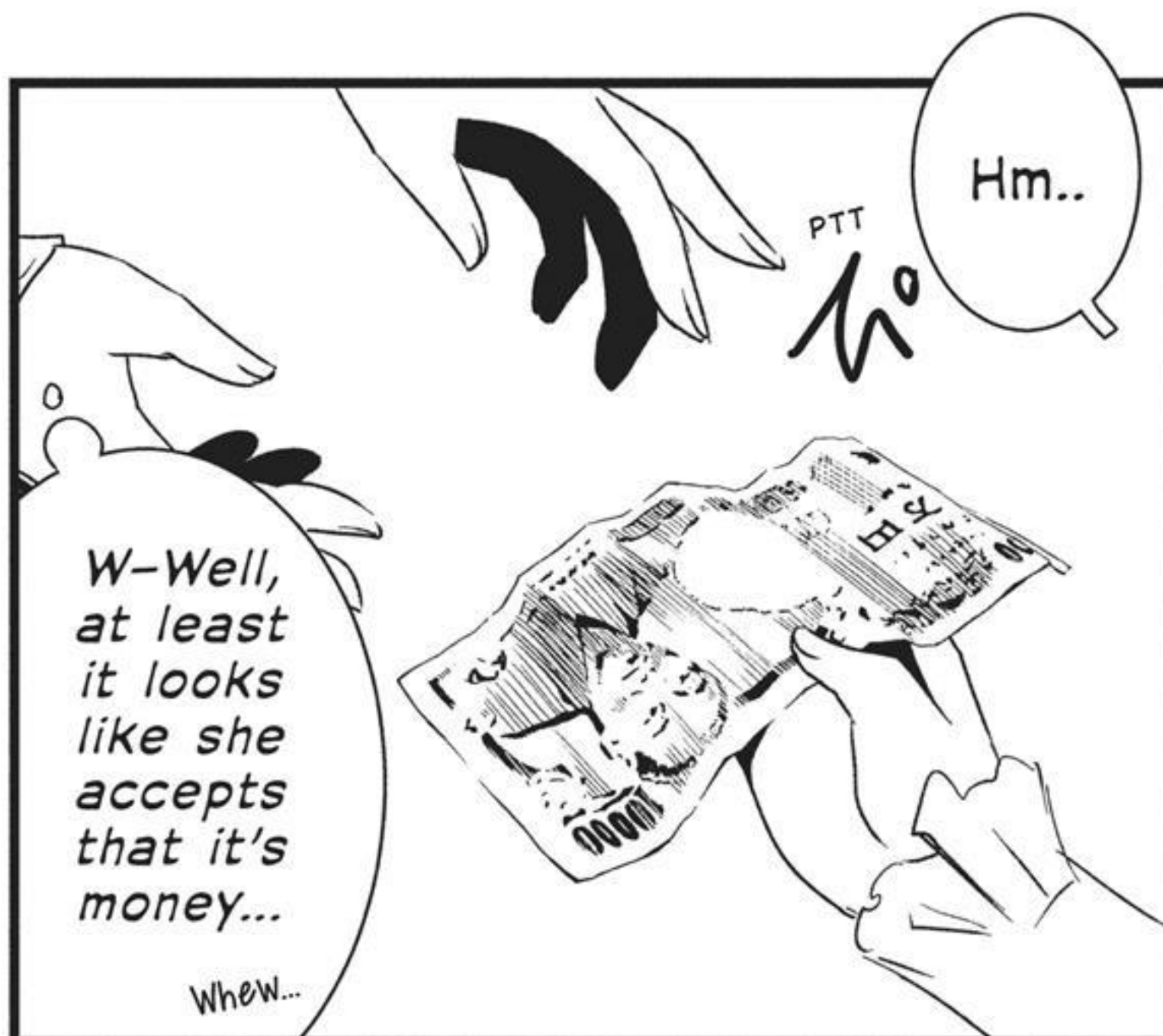
N-NO,  
Y'SEE, THIS  
IS CALLED  
A 10,000  
YEN BILL...  
AND IT'S  
REAL, LEGIT  
MONEY,  
AND...

じり  
り  
FRET

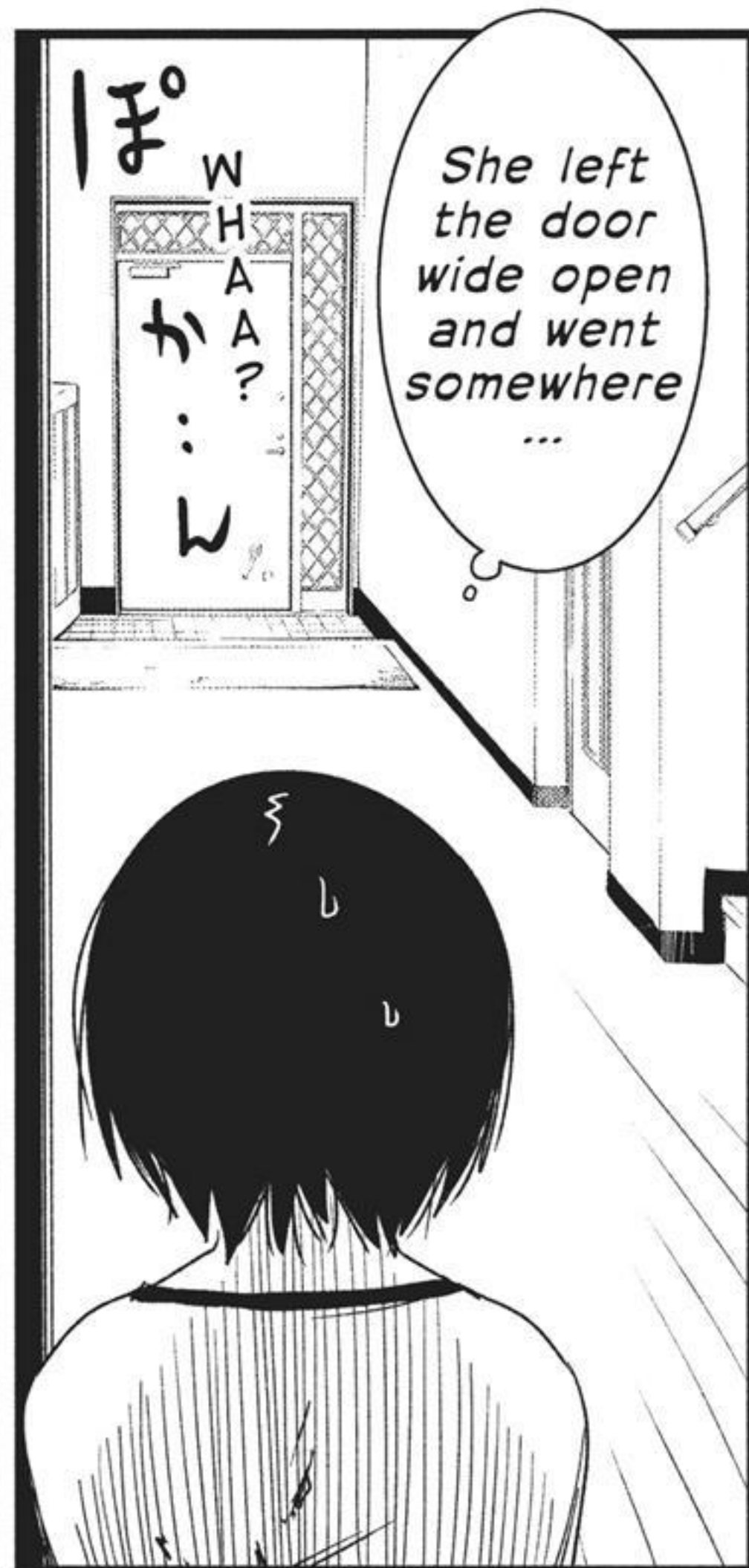
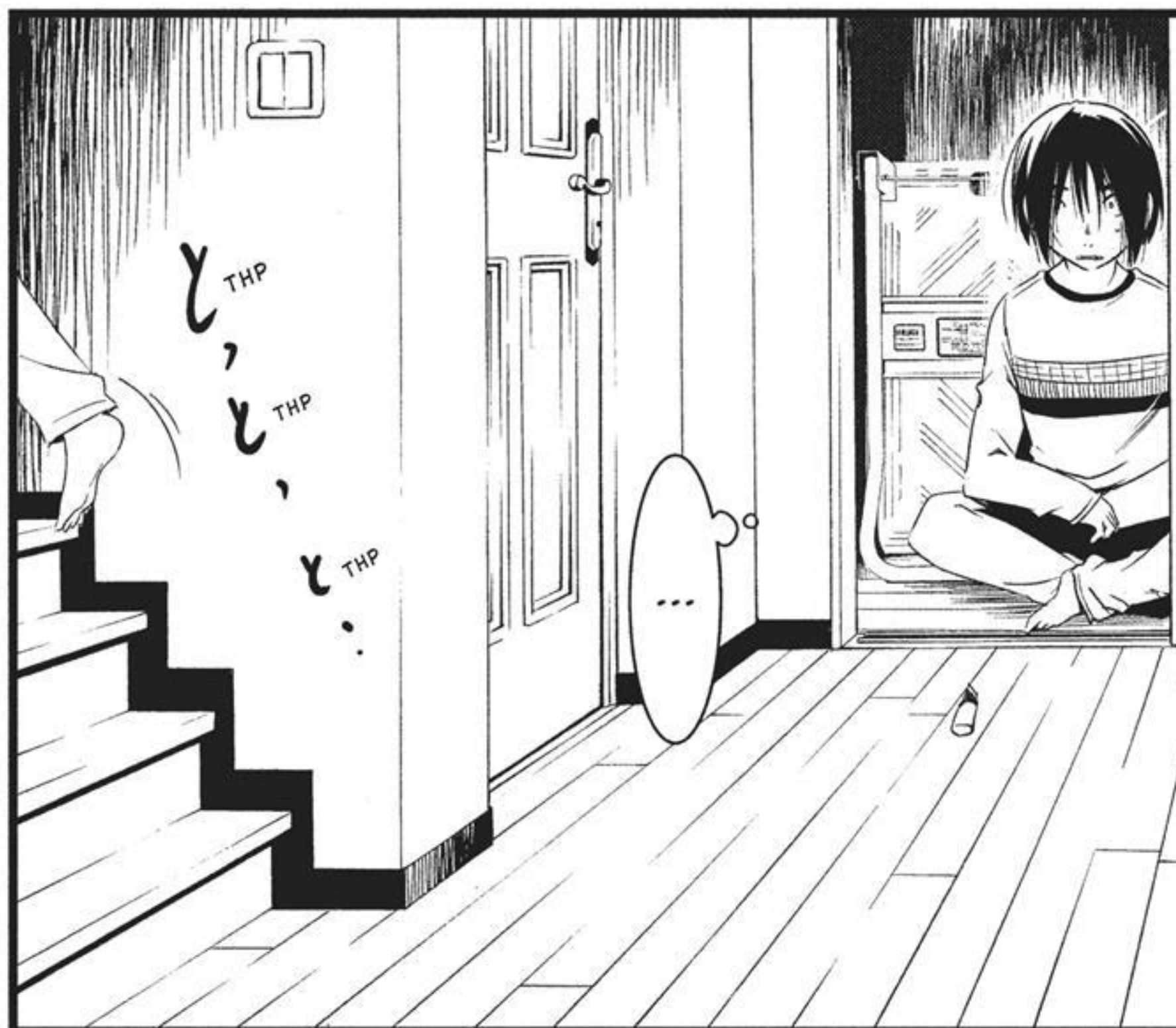
じり  
り  
FRET

じり  
り  
FRET





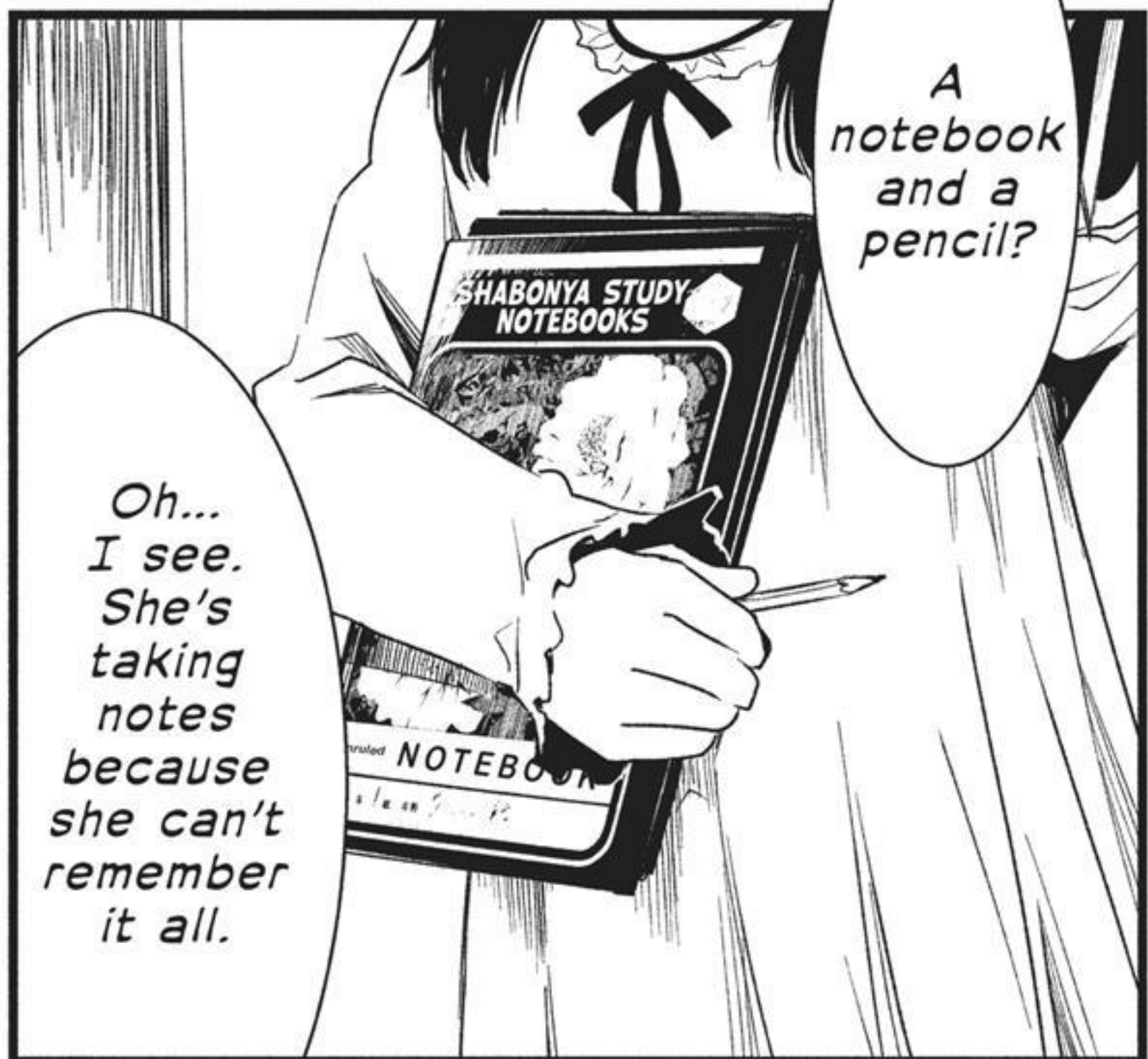
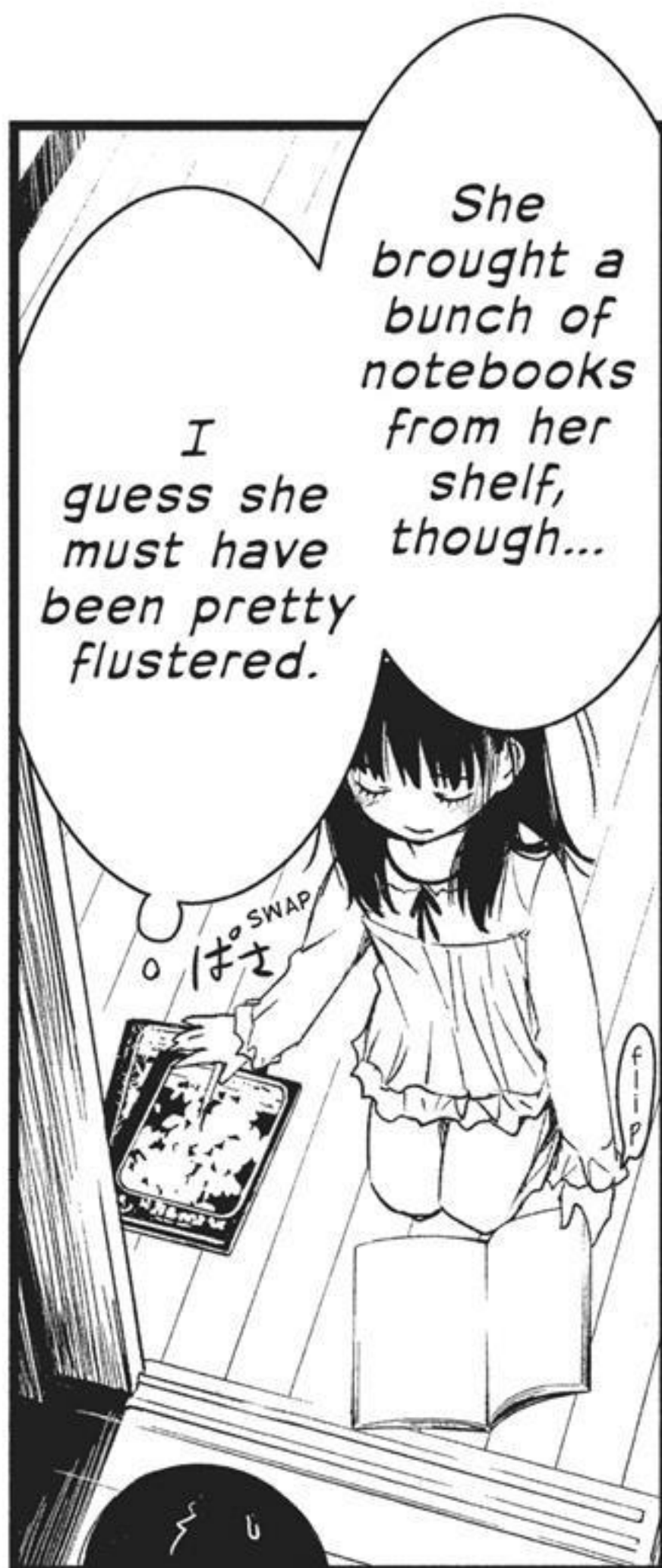




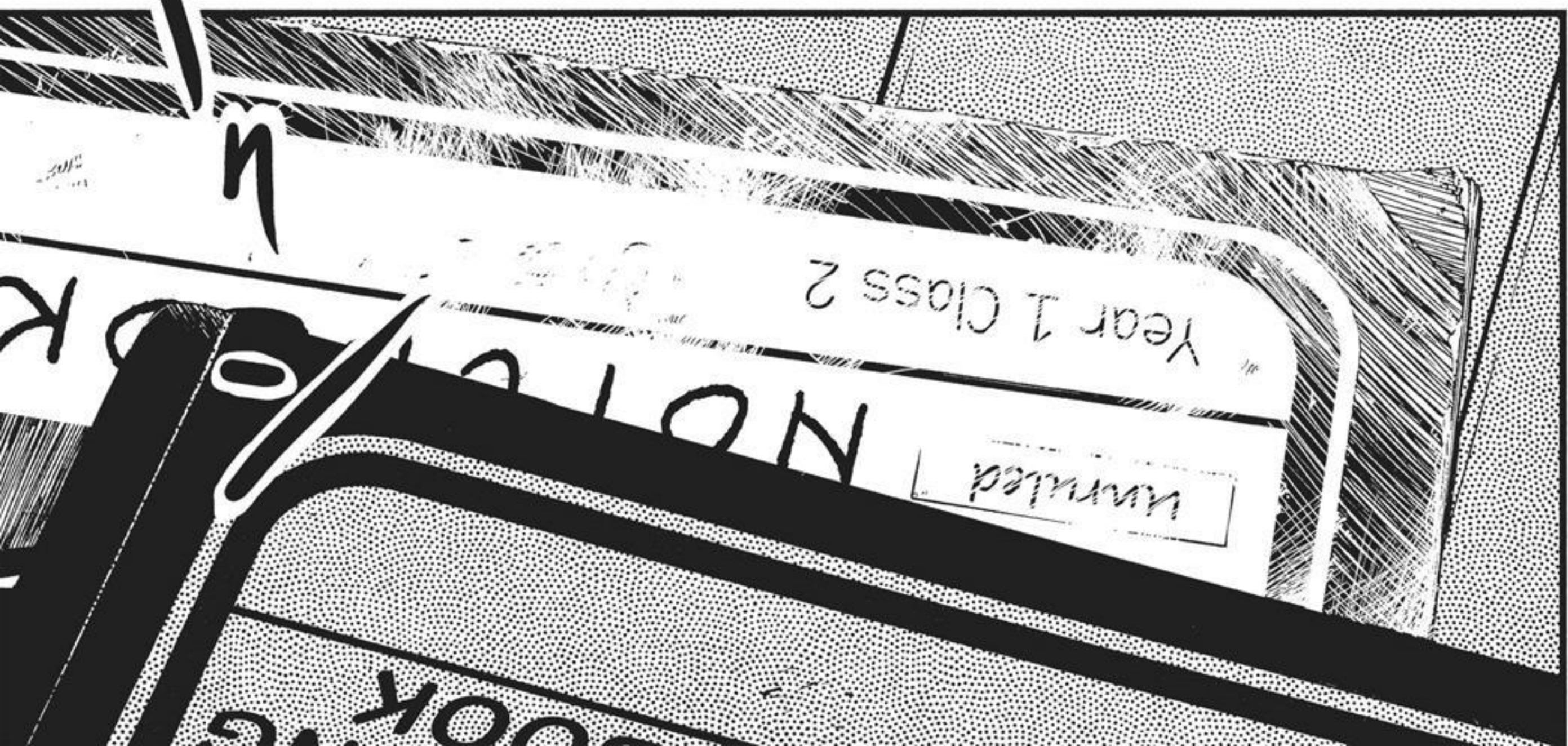












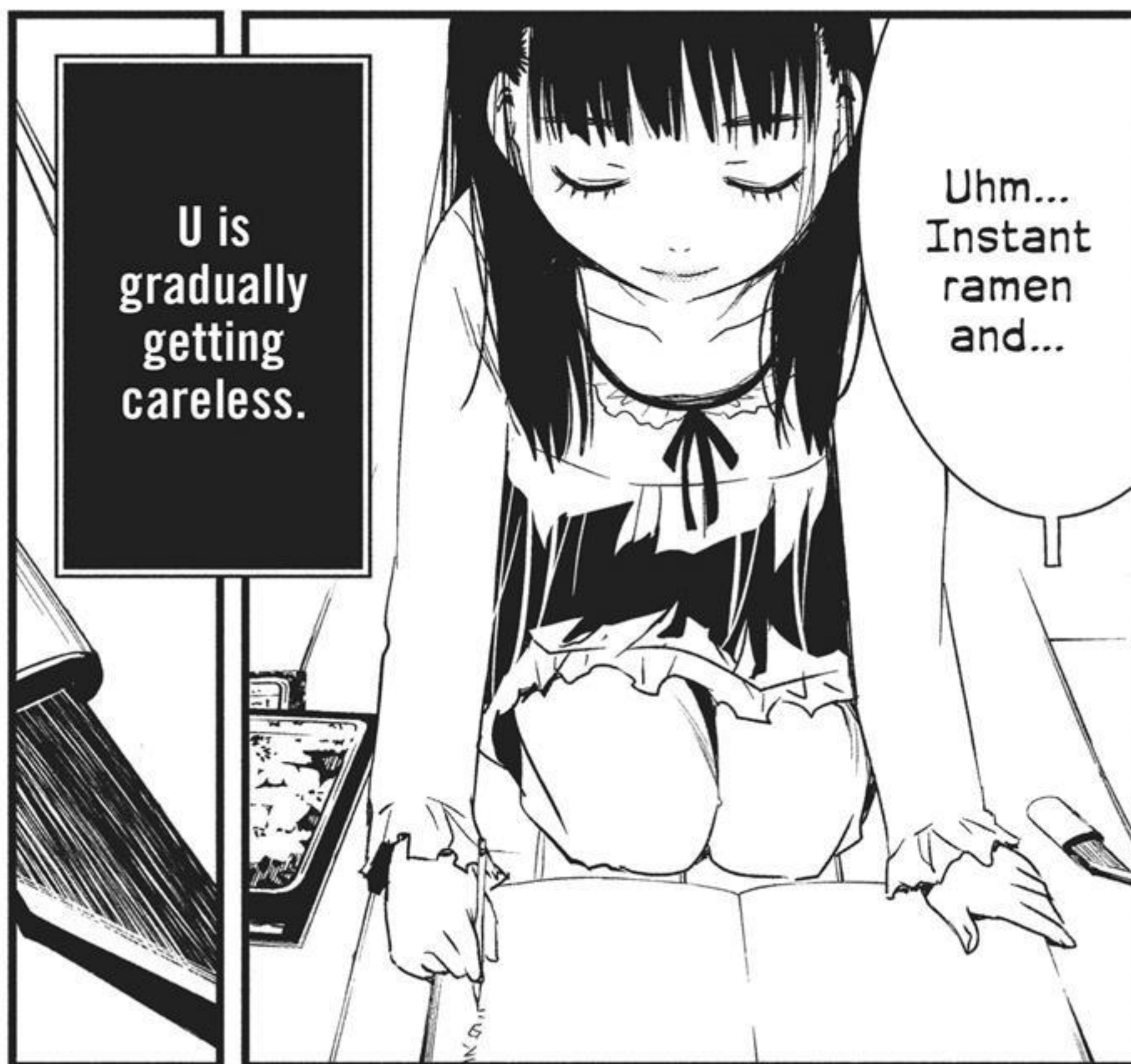












U is gradually getting careless.

Uhm... Instant ramen and...



Could you please tell me already?

Oh, right... Sorry.



is getting sloppier and sloppier.

Actually, I get the feeling that U's approach to my imprisonment



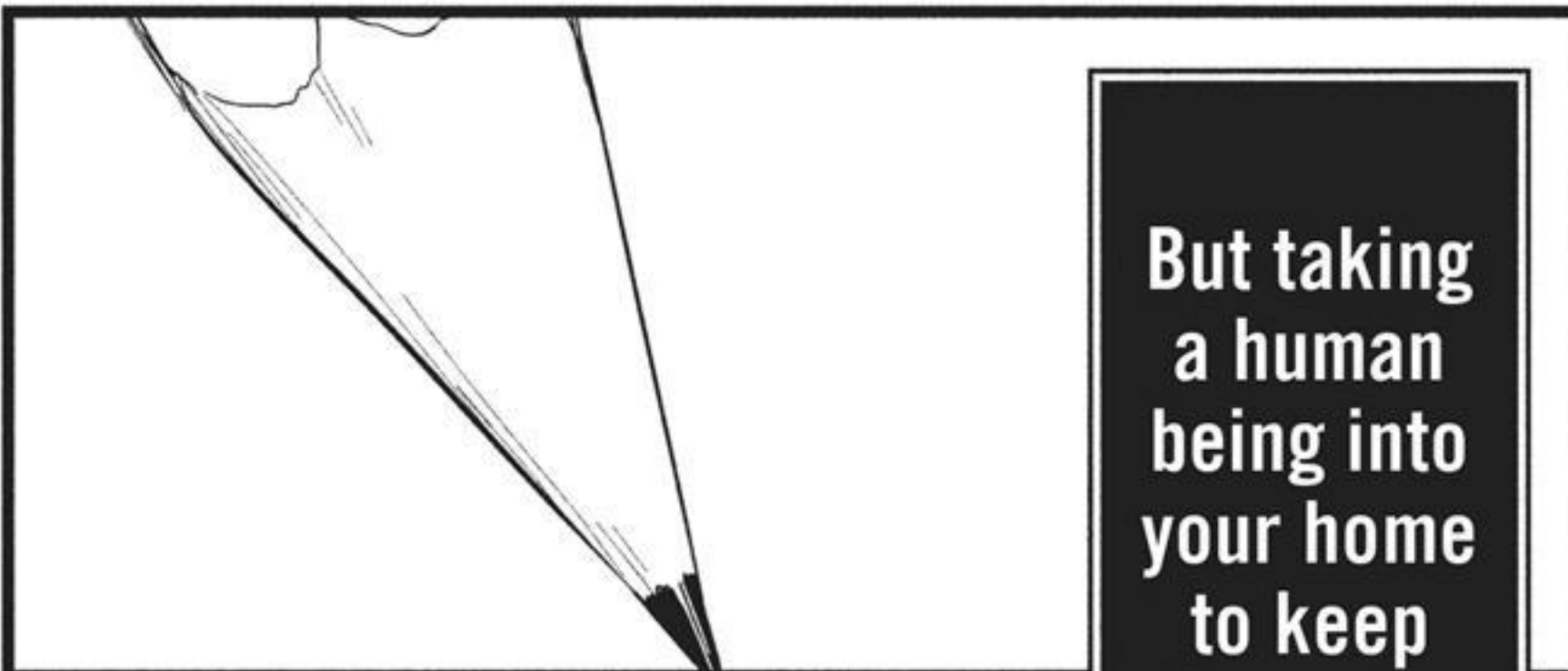


Taking  
care of  
a living  
creature  
isn't a  
simple  
task.



Maybe it's  
inevitable.

Today  
marks the  
fourth  
day...



But taking  
a human  
being into  
your home  
to keep  
like a pet

is too much  
for a grade  
schooler to  
handle, no  
matter how  
you look  
at it.



Keeping  
a dog or a  
cat is hard  
enough on  
its own.





Okay...  
This  
should  
keep us  
fed for a  
week.



Oh, and  
also—  
some...

Maybe  
I can get  
some more  
variety in  
there since  
she's taking  
notes.



Okay. I  
understand.

Okay.  
Then  
I'm

ptam



...



...  
you.

She  
didn't  
forget  
to lock  
the  
door  
this  
time



WHAP

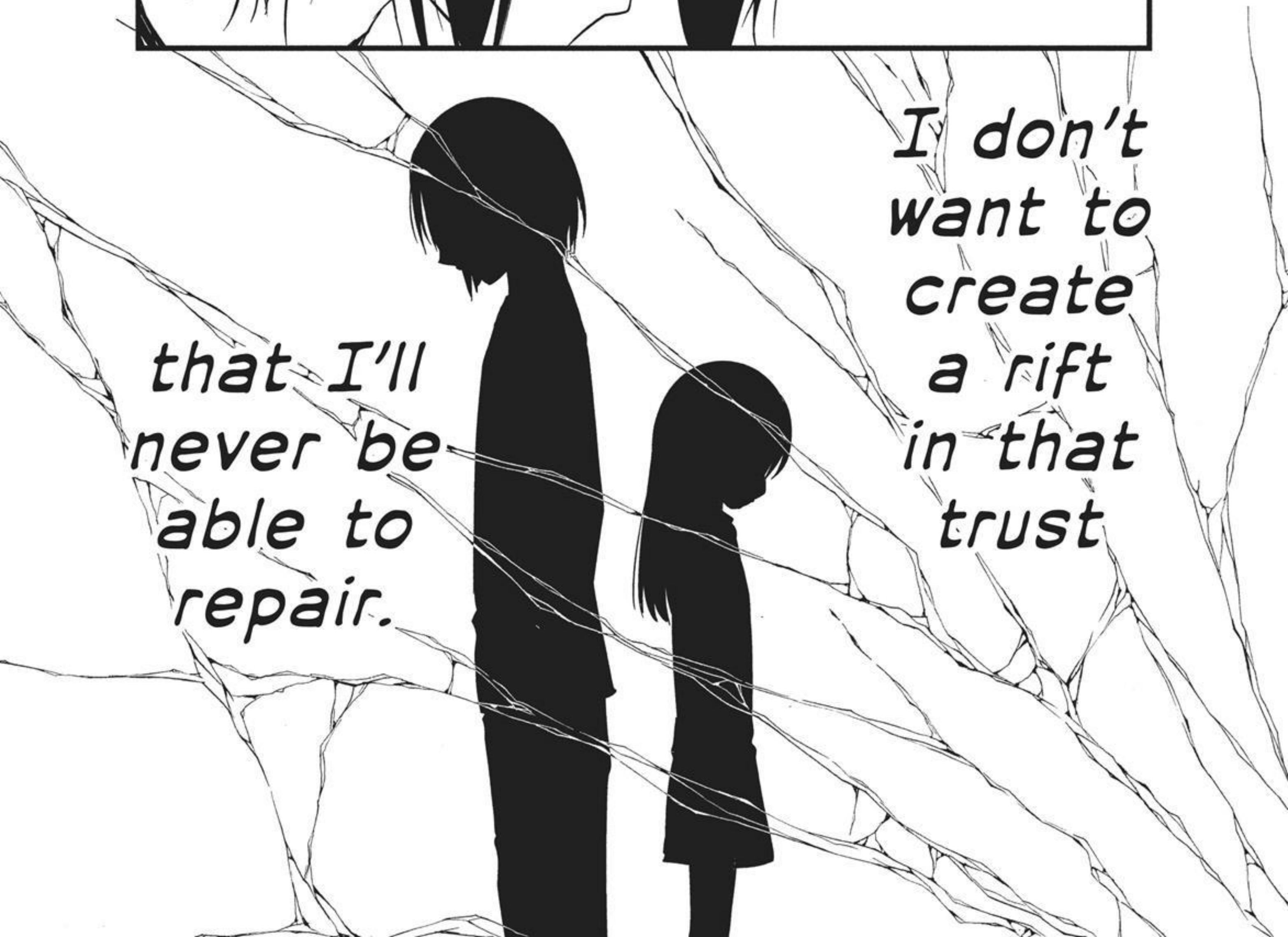
SLAAAM

counting  
on...

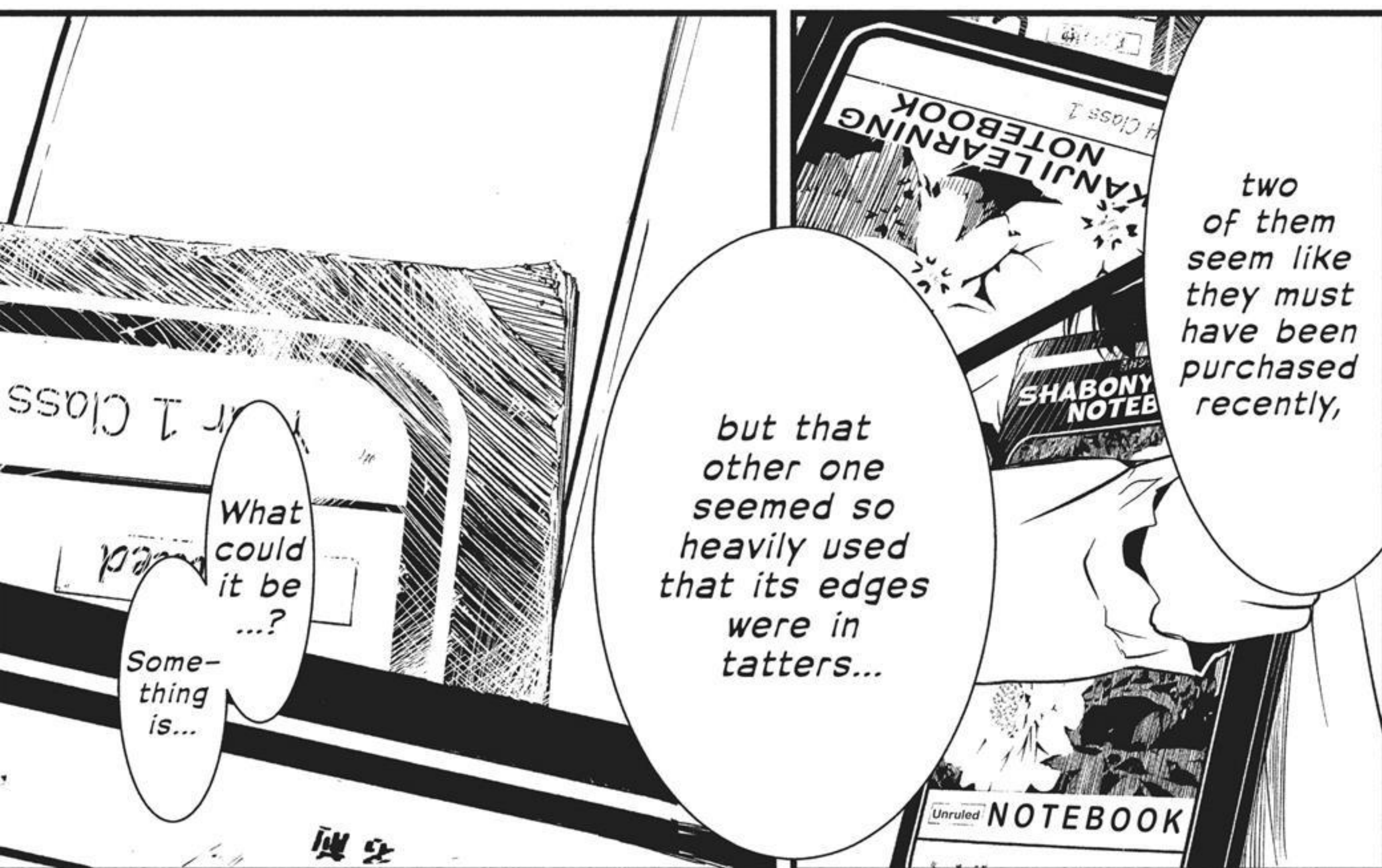




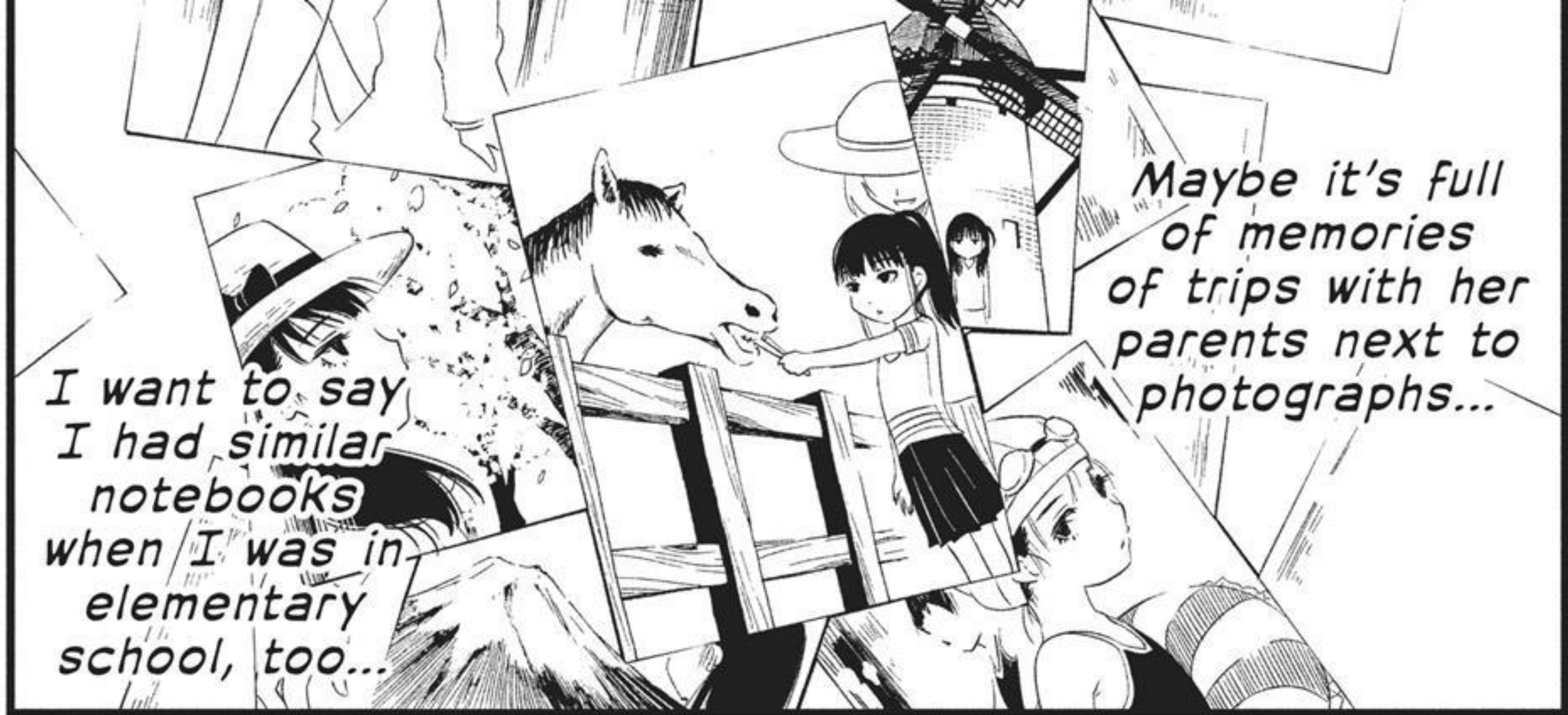






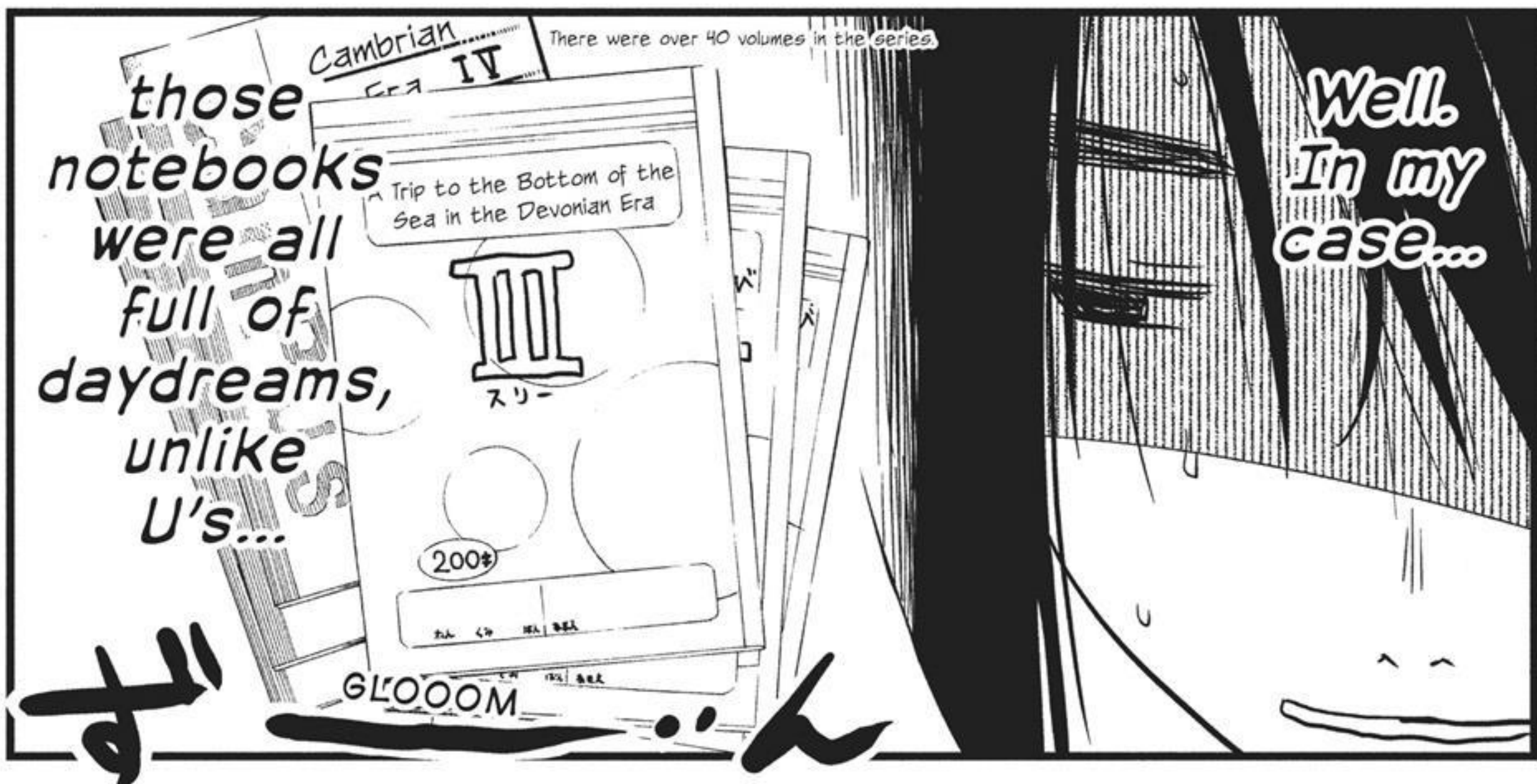






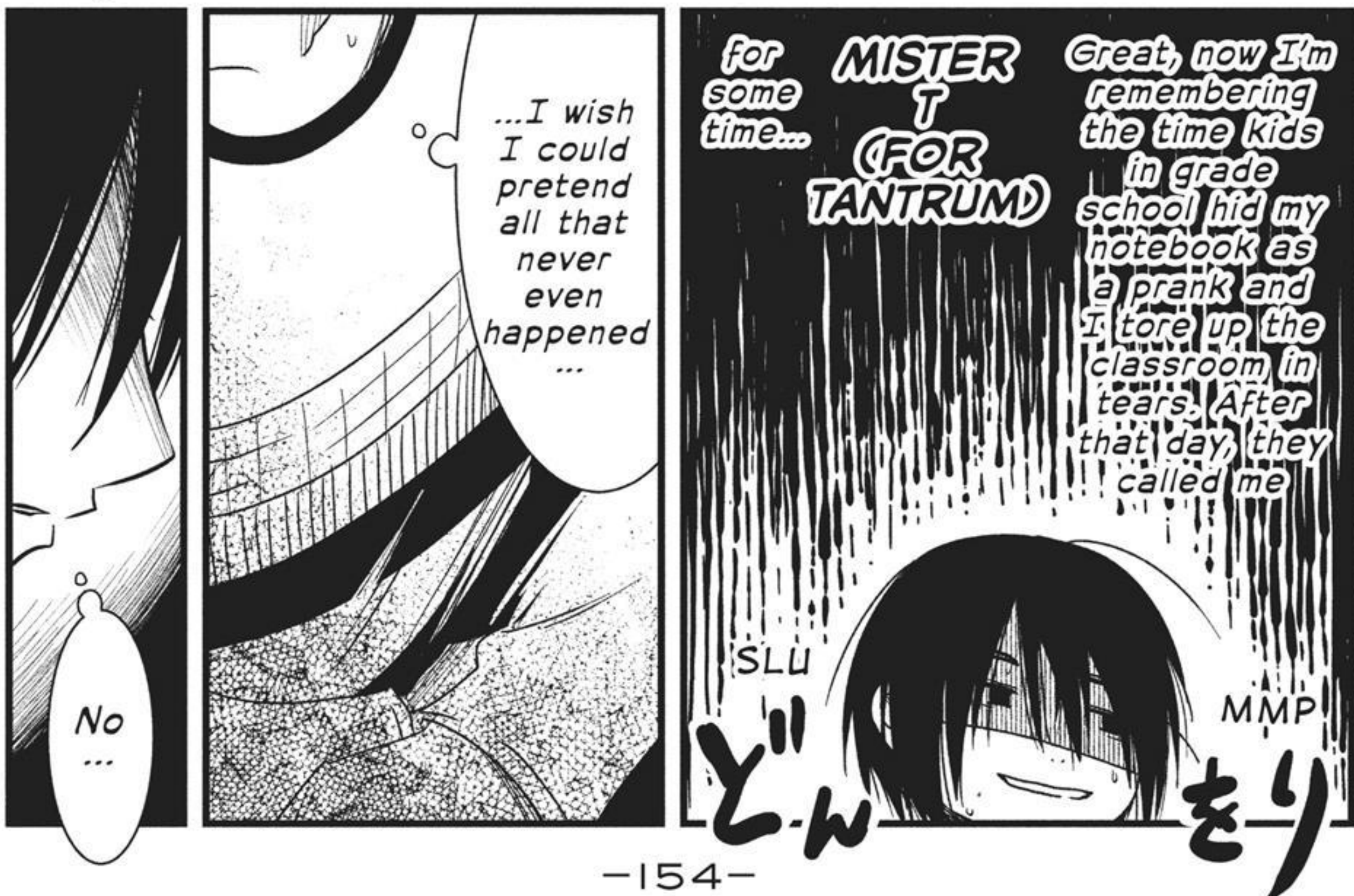
I want to say  
I had similar  
notebooks  
when I was in  
elementary  
school, too...

Maybe it's full  
of memories  
of trips with her  
parents next to  
photographs...



those  
notebooks  
were all  
full of  
daydreams,  
unlike  
U's...

Well.  
In my  
case...



...I wish  
I could  
pretend  
all that  
never  
even  
happened  
...

for  
some  
time...

**MISTER  
T  
(FOR  
TANTRUM)**

Great, now I'm  
remembering  
the time kids  
in grade  
school hid my  
notebook as  
a prank and  
I tore up the  
classroom in  
tears. After  
that day, they  
called me

No  
...





*Stories  
that will  
only ever  
reach me,  
and no one  
else...*




*The  
content  
of those  
notebooks  
back  
then*



*Does  
something  
like that  
really  
exist...?*

*A border  
separating  
pros and  
amateurs  
...?*



*and  
the novel  
manuscripts  
I'm writing now  
are the same  
thing, right?*





*Will I  
really  
be able*

*to  
become*

*a  
novelist*

*from  
here?*



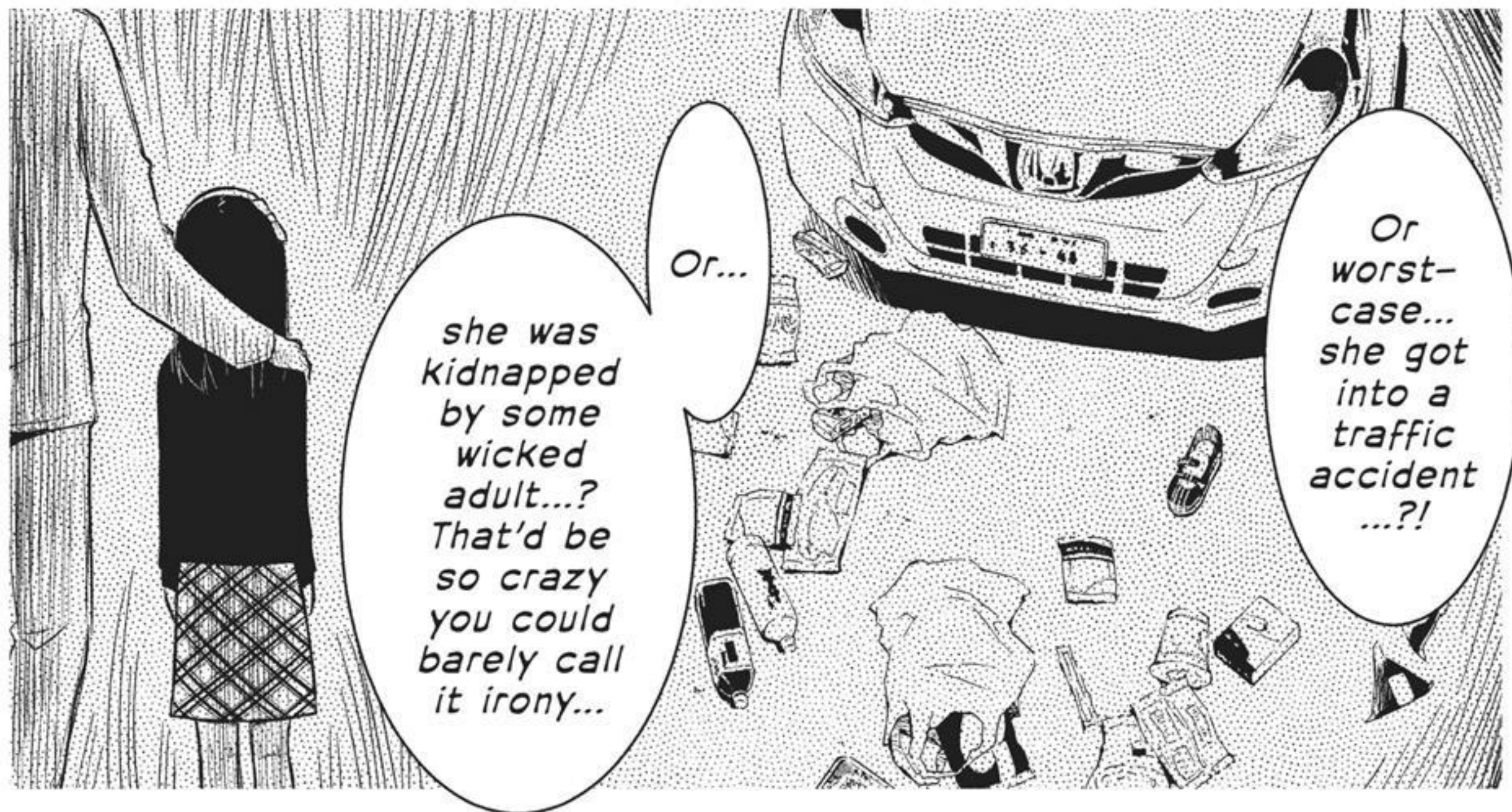


making  
a detour  
somewhere  
...?



It's  
taking  
her a  
while  
to get  
back  
...

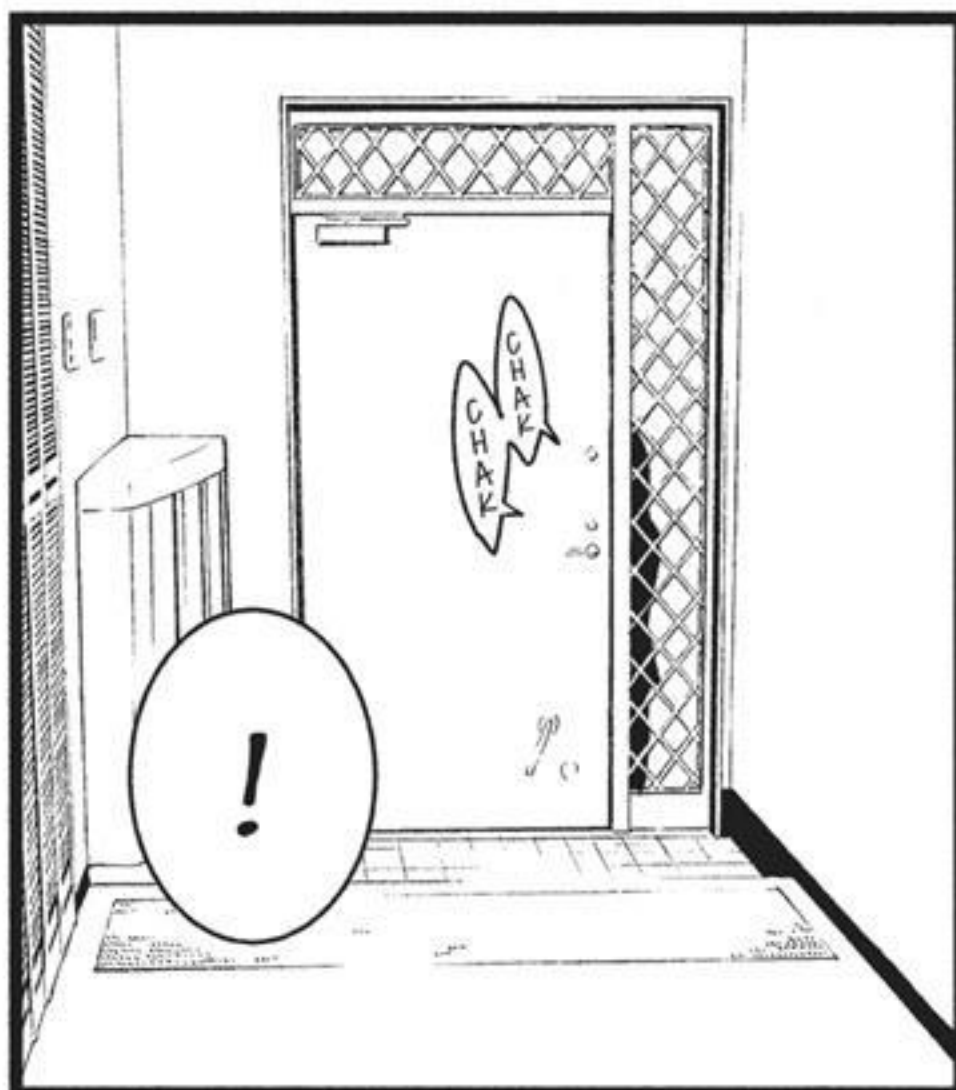
...



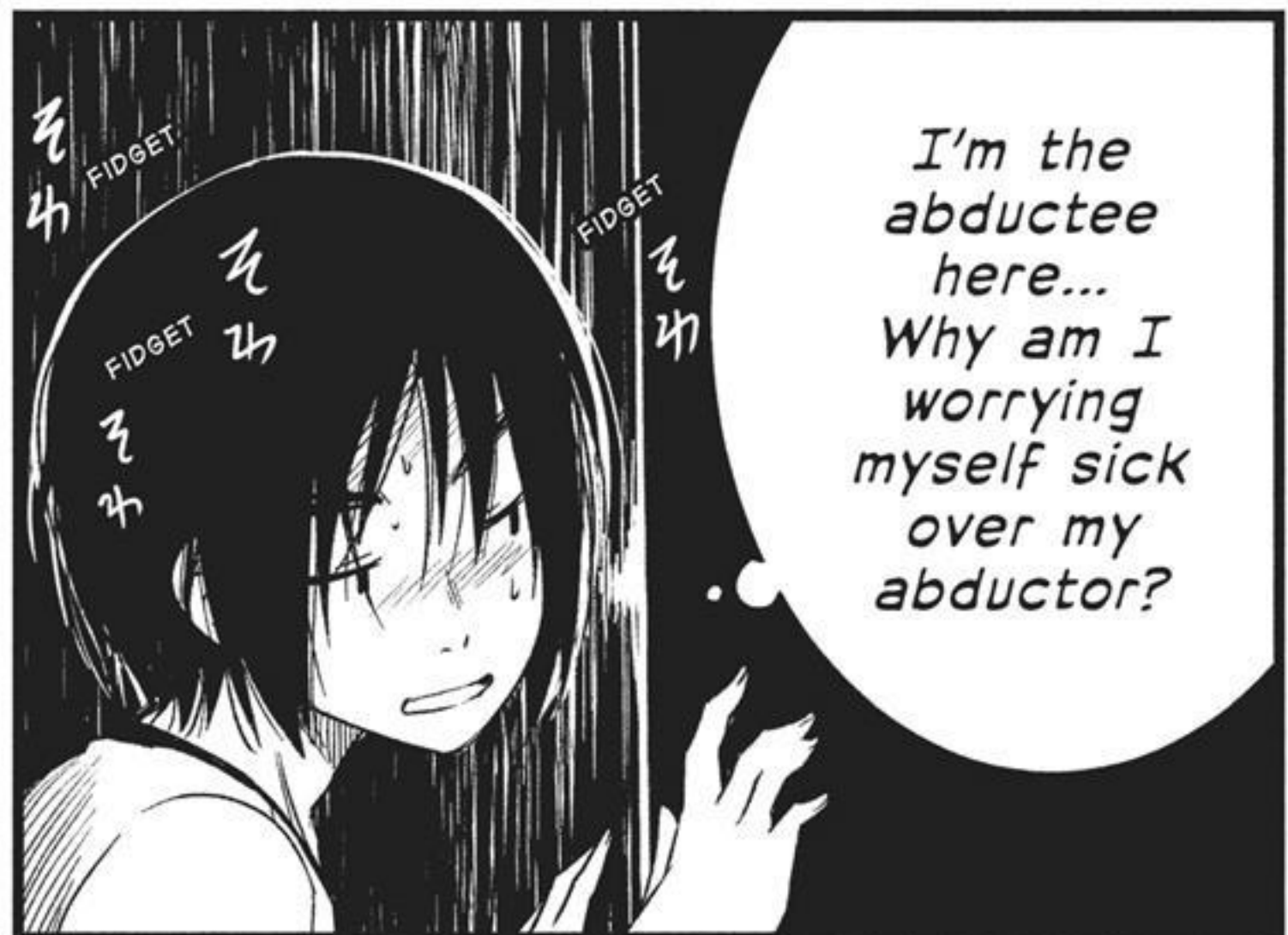
Or...

she was  
kidnapped  
by some  
wicked  
adult...?  
That'd be  
so crazy  
you could  
barely call  
it irony...

Or  
worst-  
case...  
she got  
into a  
traffic  
accident  
...?!

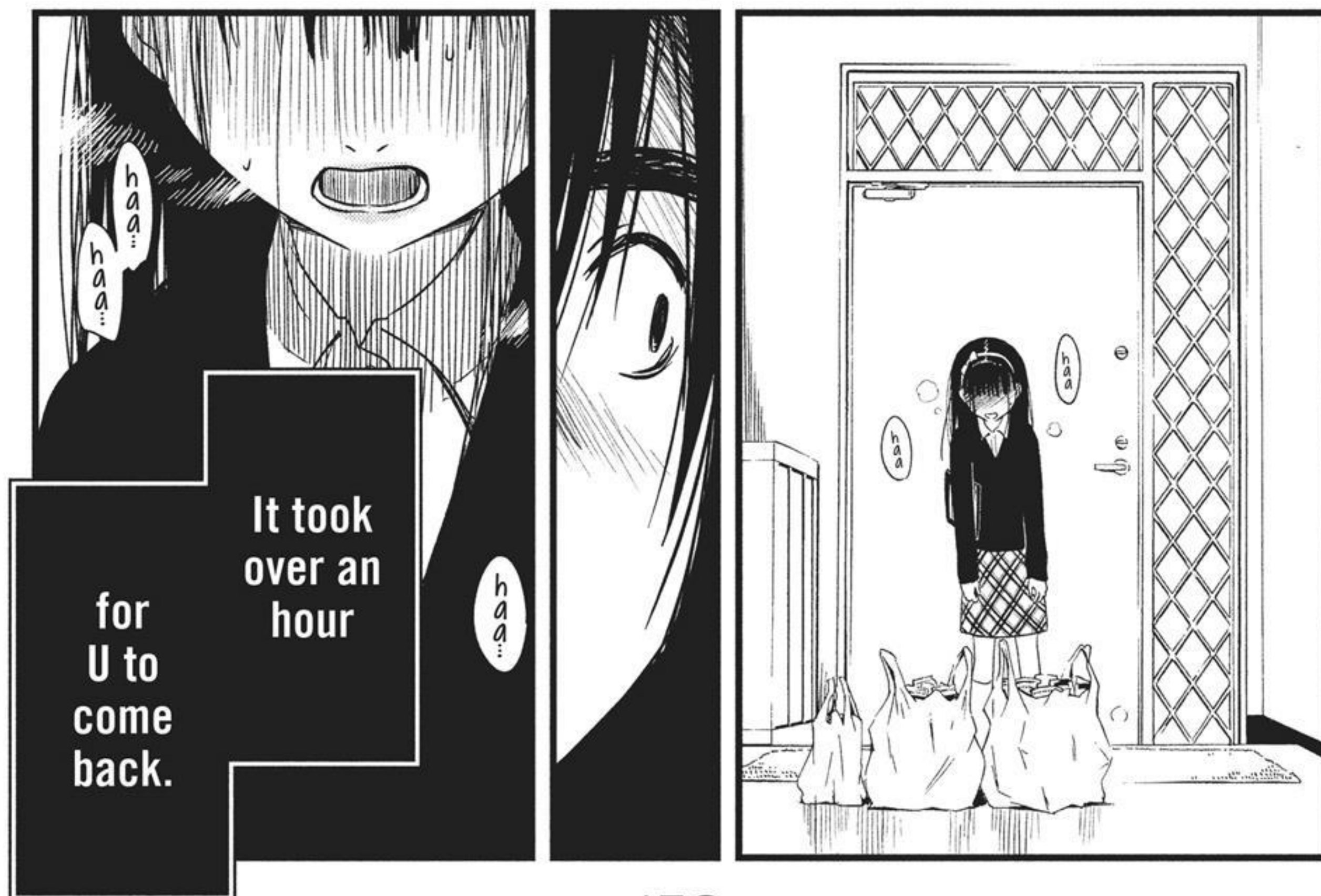


!



I'm the  
abductee  
here...  
Why am I  
worrying  
myself sick  
over my  
abductor?













But...

it  
took  
me

a little  
bit of time.  
I'm sorry.





I'd  
thought  
it was a  
good  
idea,

but it  
turned out  
I was being  
completely  
self-  
centered.

I  
wish I  
could  
go up  
to my  
old  
self

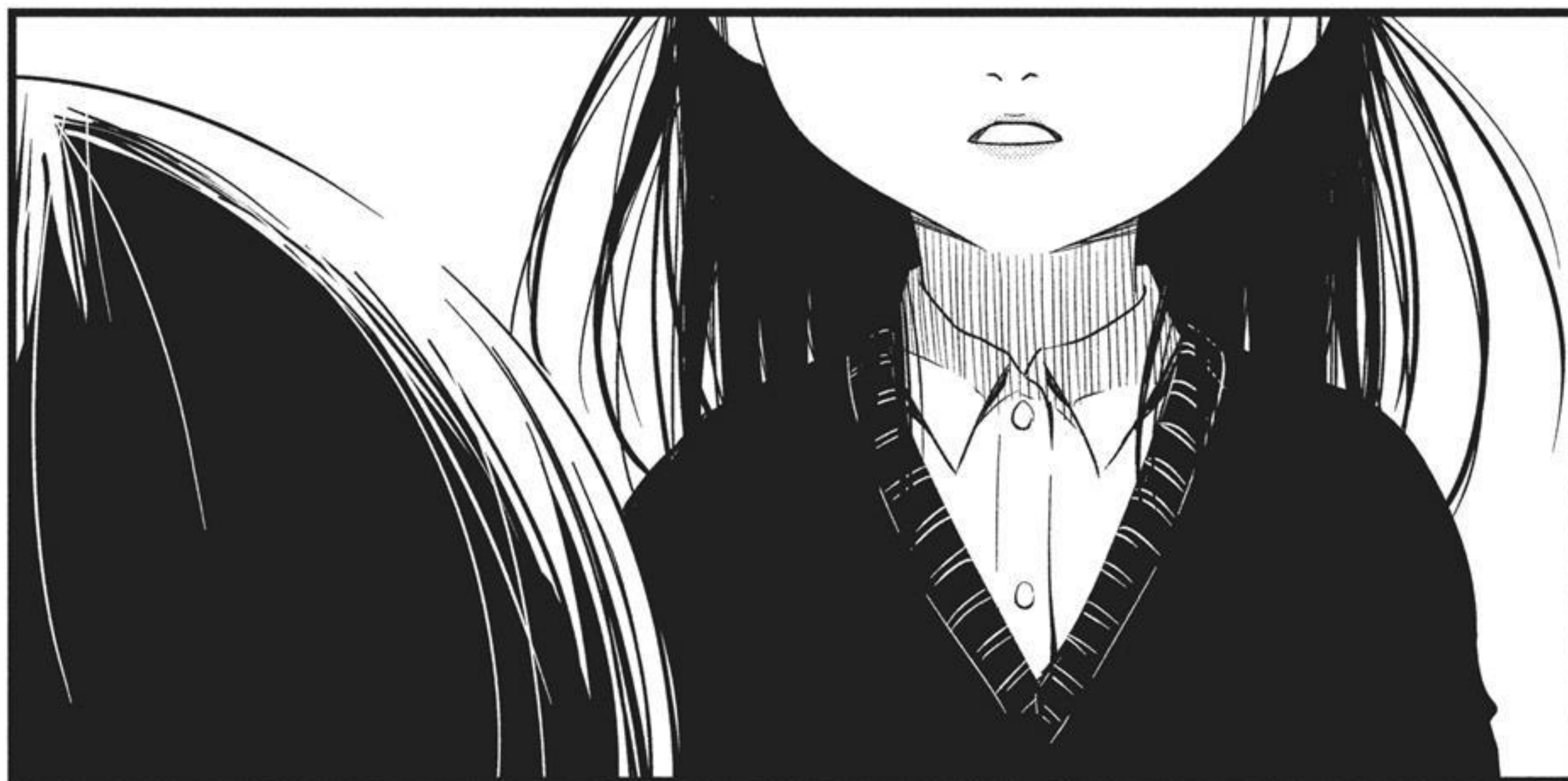
and  
demand  
that he  
reflect  
on what  
he did.



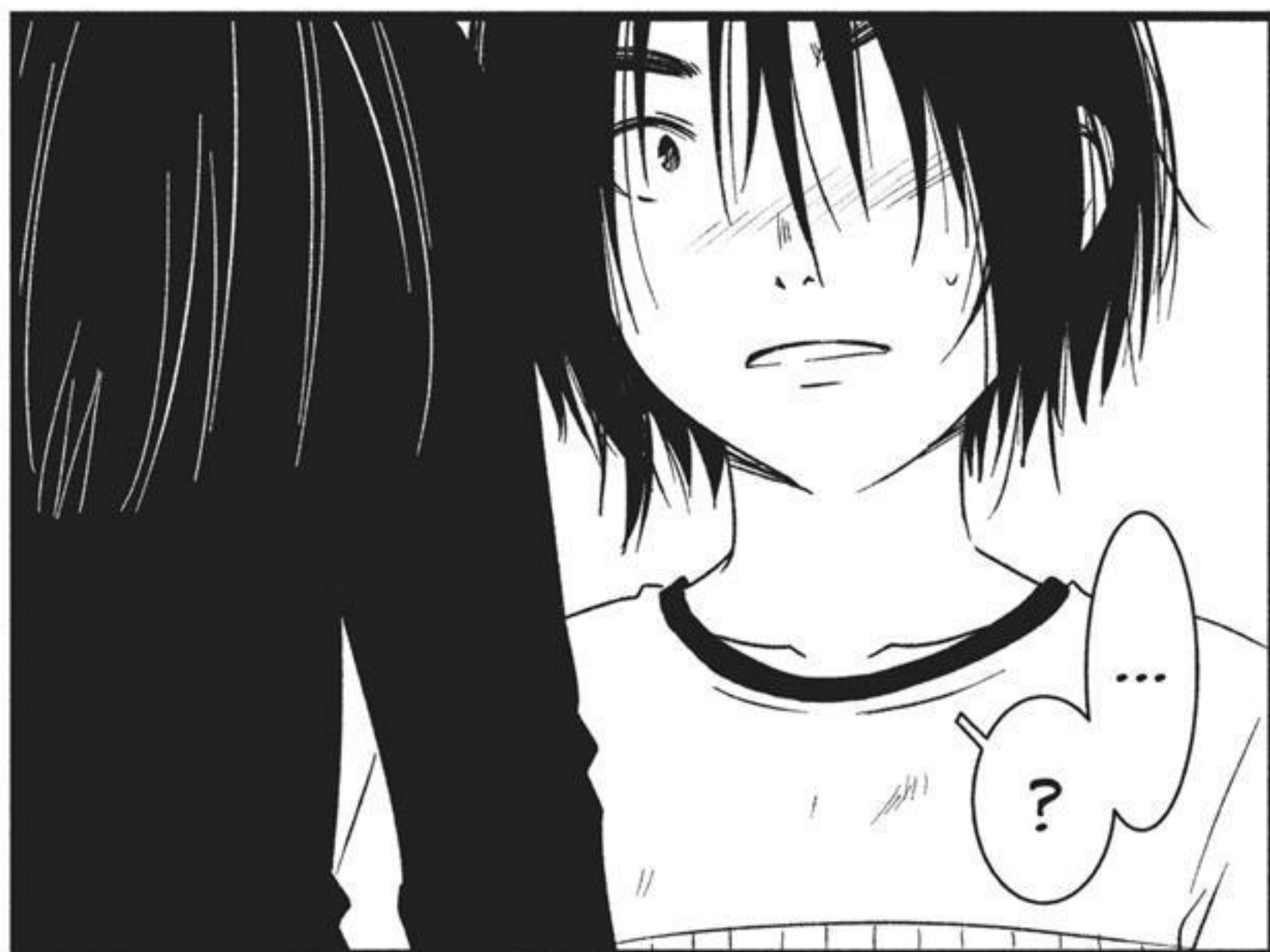




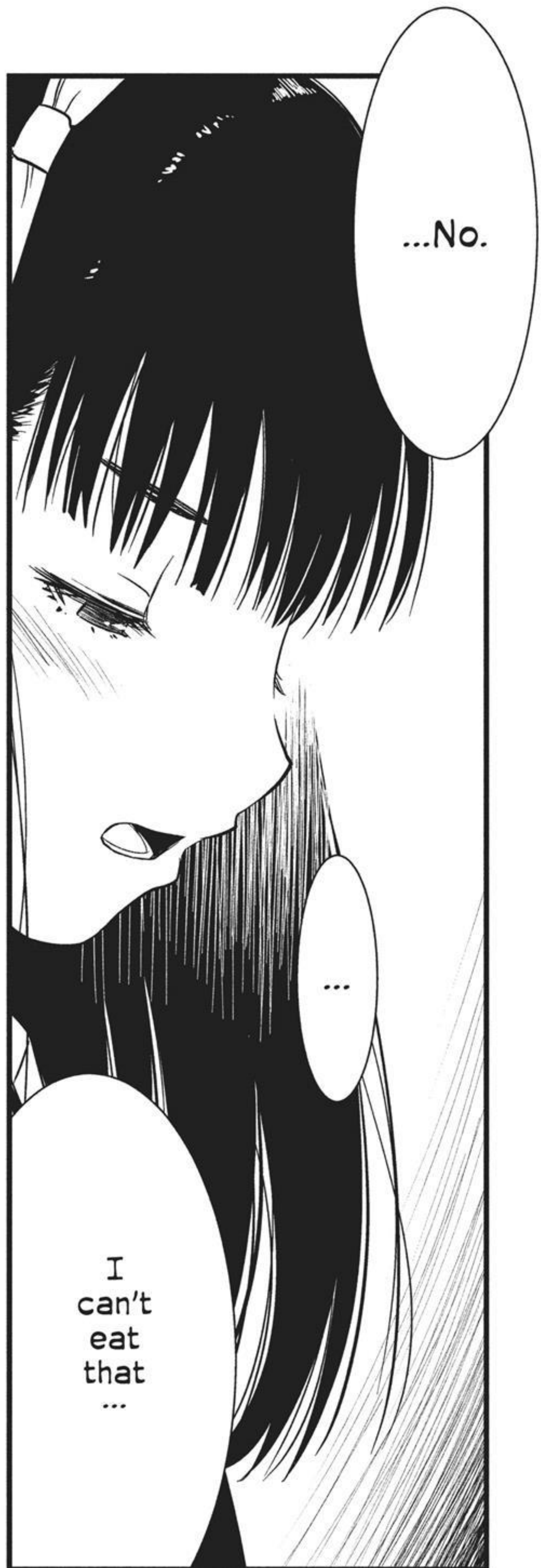








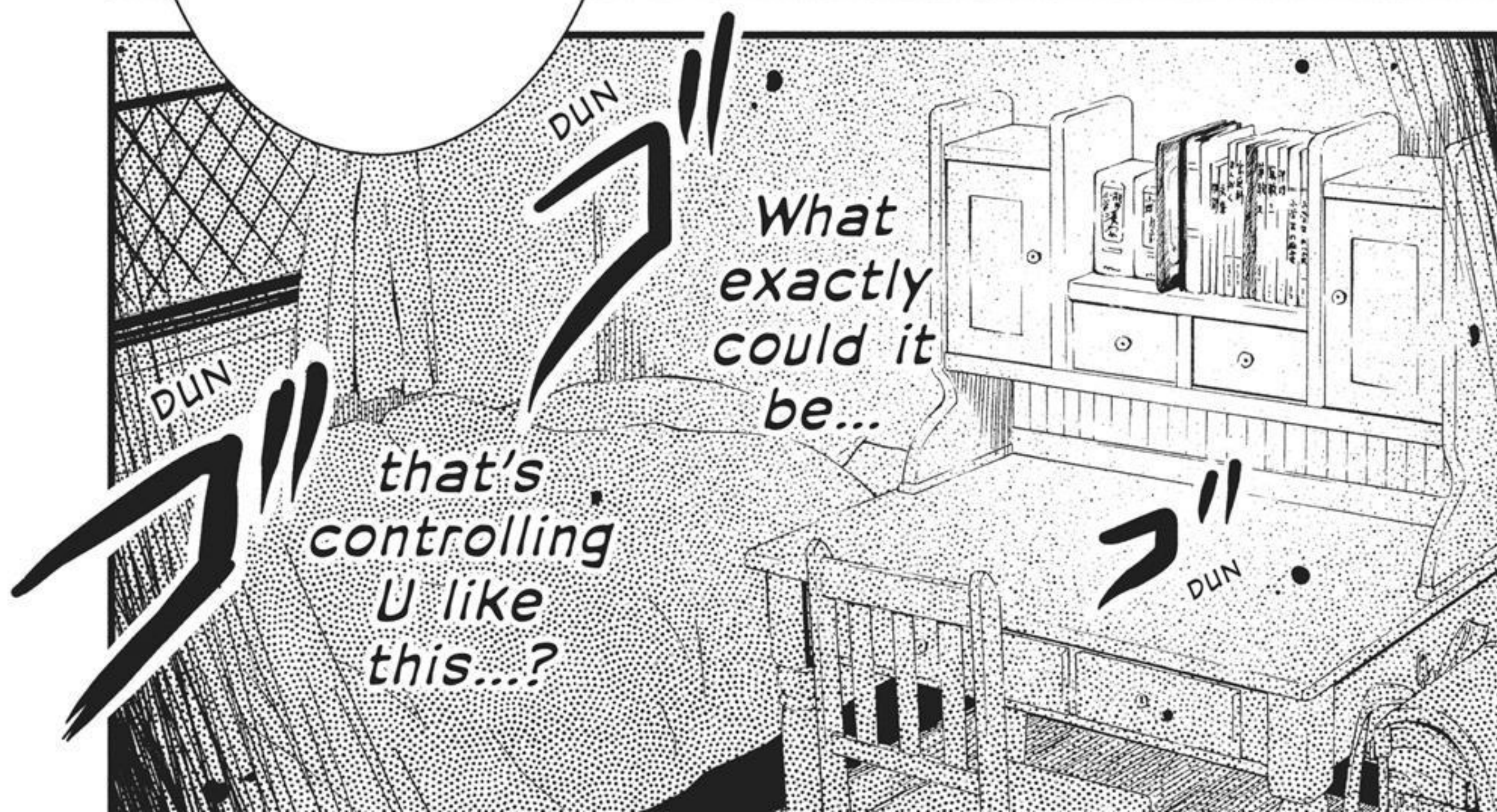




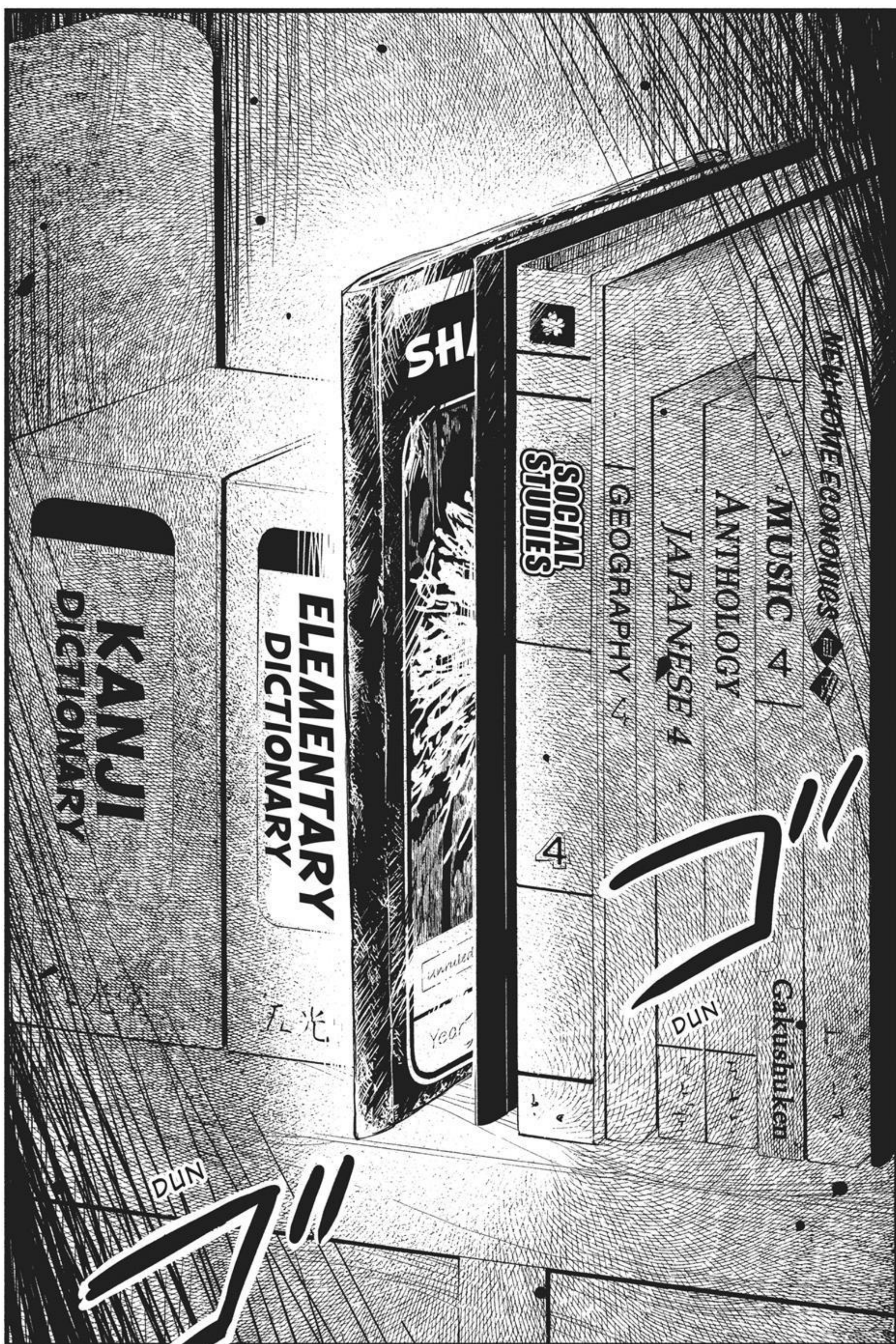




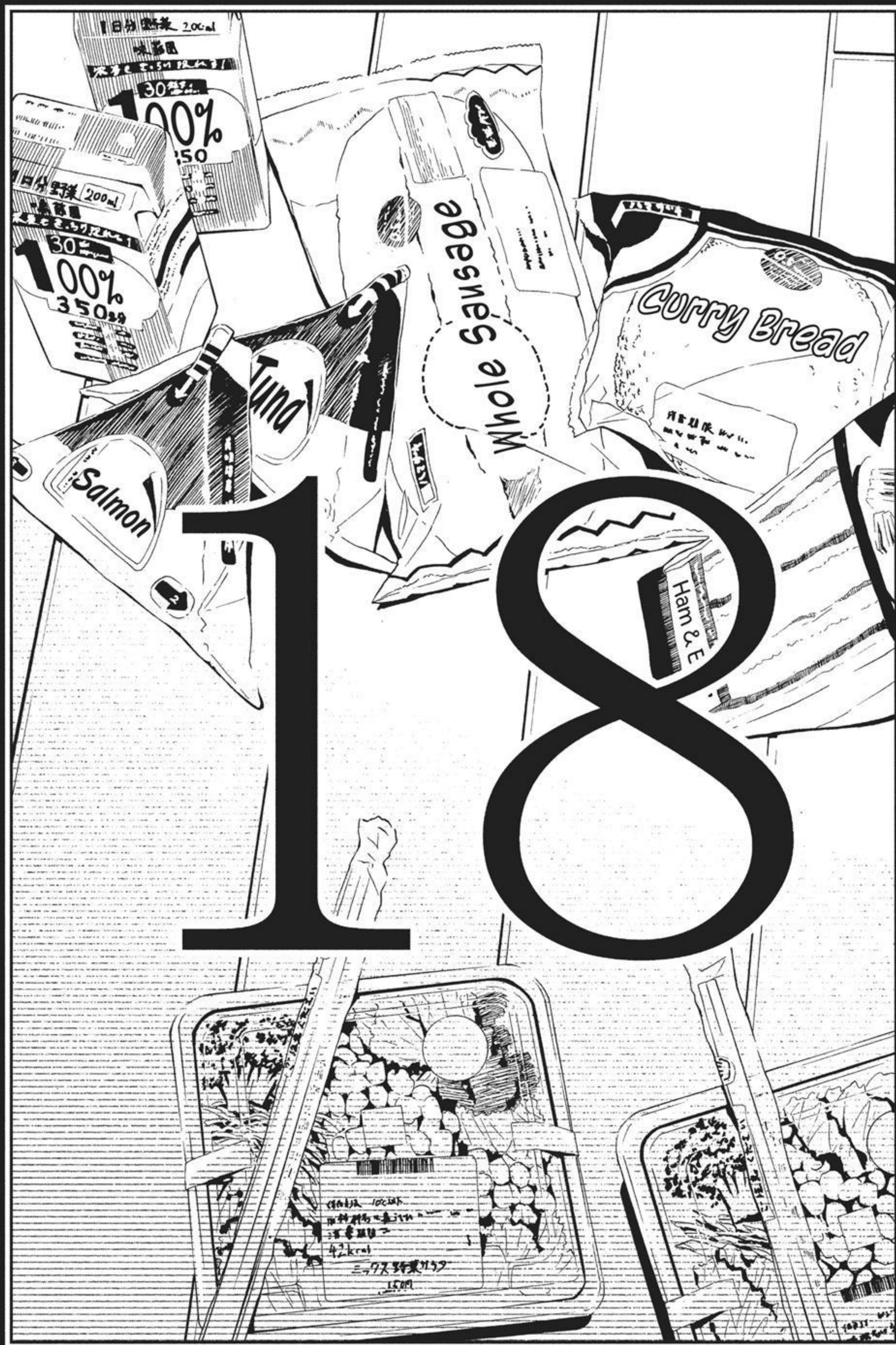
























She's  
so  
hungry  
she  
looks  
like

a  
carnivorous  
beast...



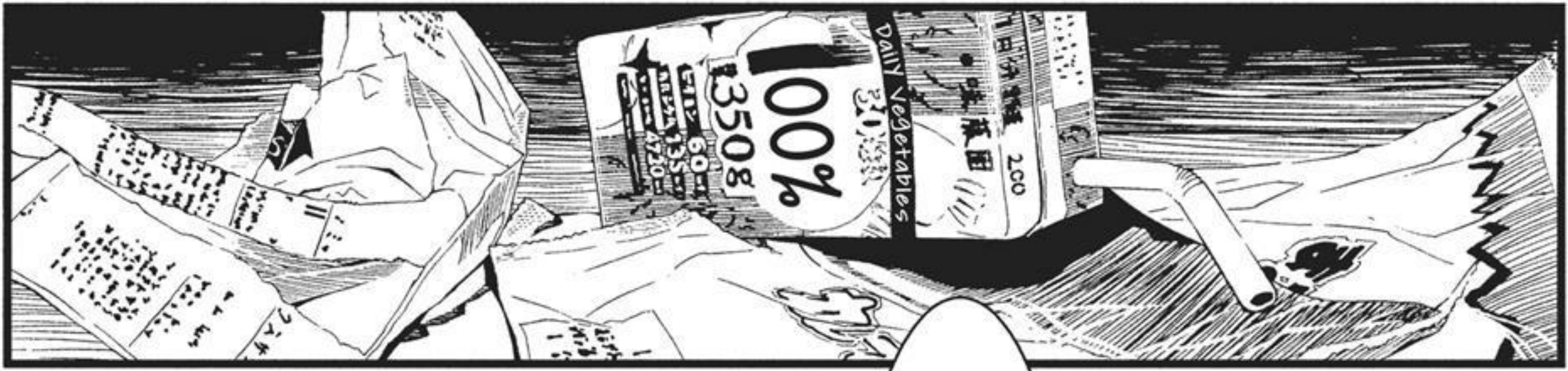
U's  
hunger  
was  
at its  
limits.

I guess  
the half of  
a school  
lunch  
she ate  
yesterday  
wasn't  
nearly  
enough.

after I  
convinced  
her it was  
okay to  
eat some  
of the food  
I bought  
with  
my own  
money...

I can't  
believe how  
much her  
personality  
changed





Thank  
you  
for the  
food.







and what could they be doing right now...?!



Where did her parents "go away" to...

She's such a young girl, and she's been left to starve like this...



I'd been waiting for them all this time like they would be my saviors or something,

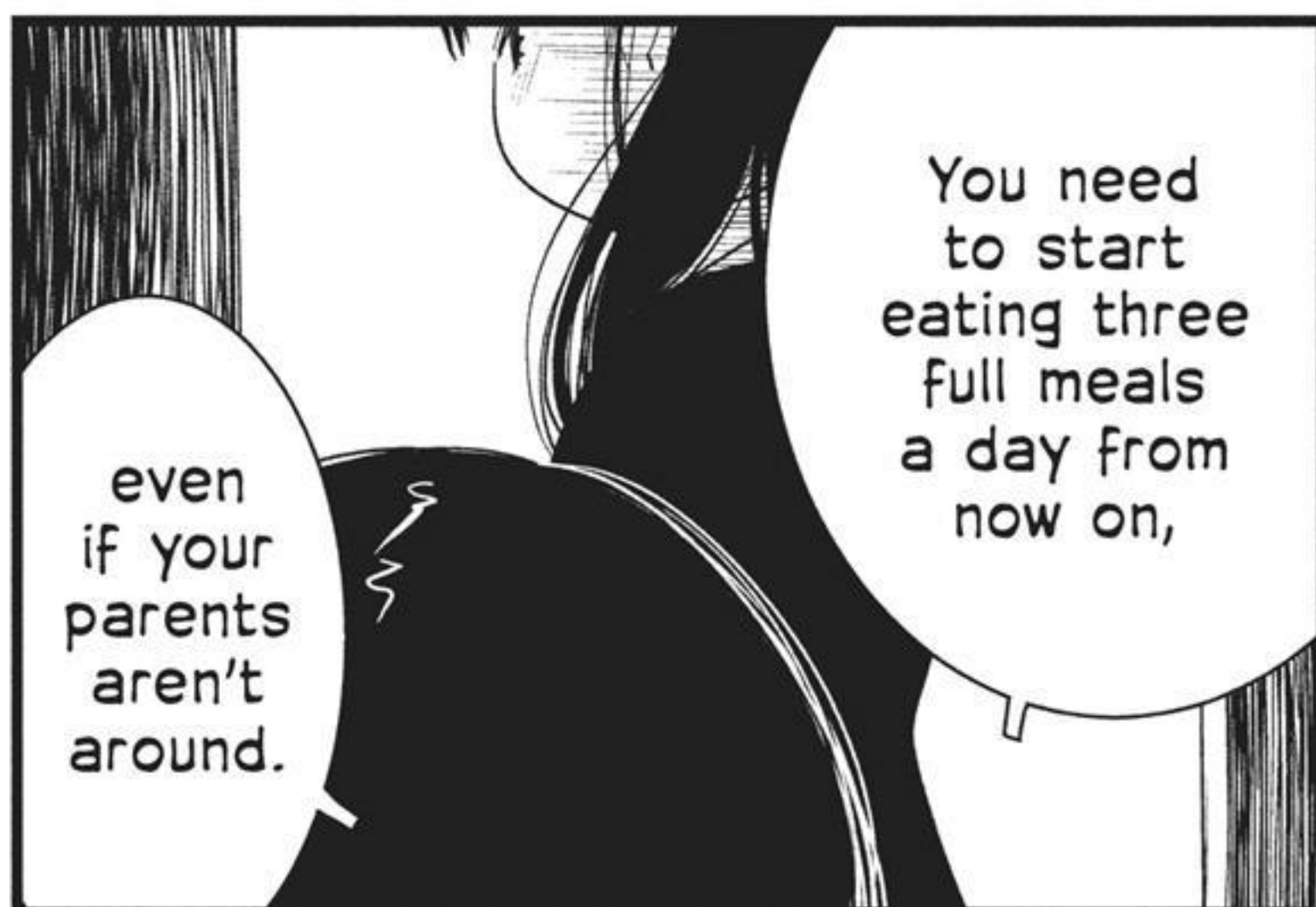
but I don't see any way that's still possible....!!





*when  
a child  
turns out  
strange  
...?!*

*And  
anyway,  
aren't  
the  
parents  
usually  
the ones  
at fault*



even  
if your  
parents  
aren't  
around.

You need  
to start  
eating three  
full meals  
a day from  
now on,



Oh...  
U.





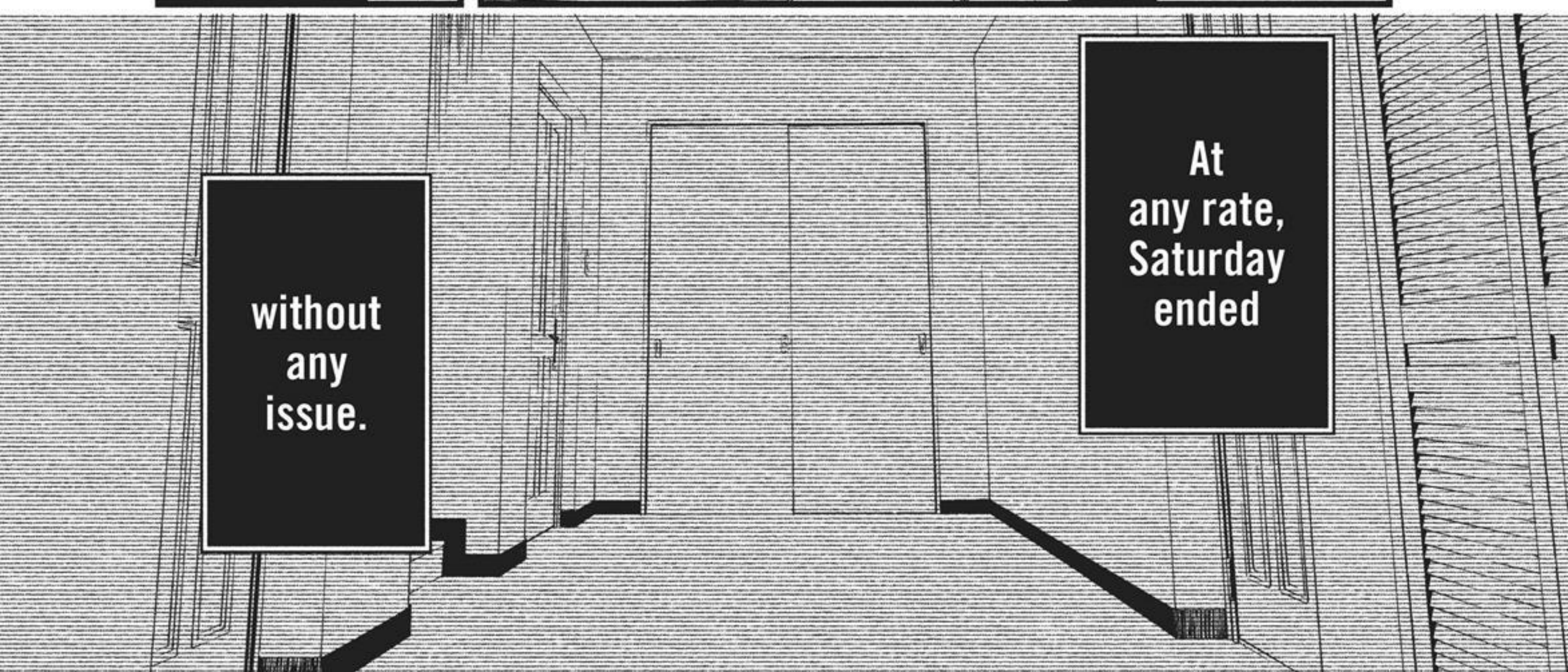














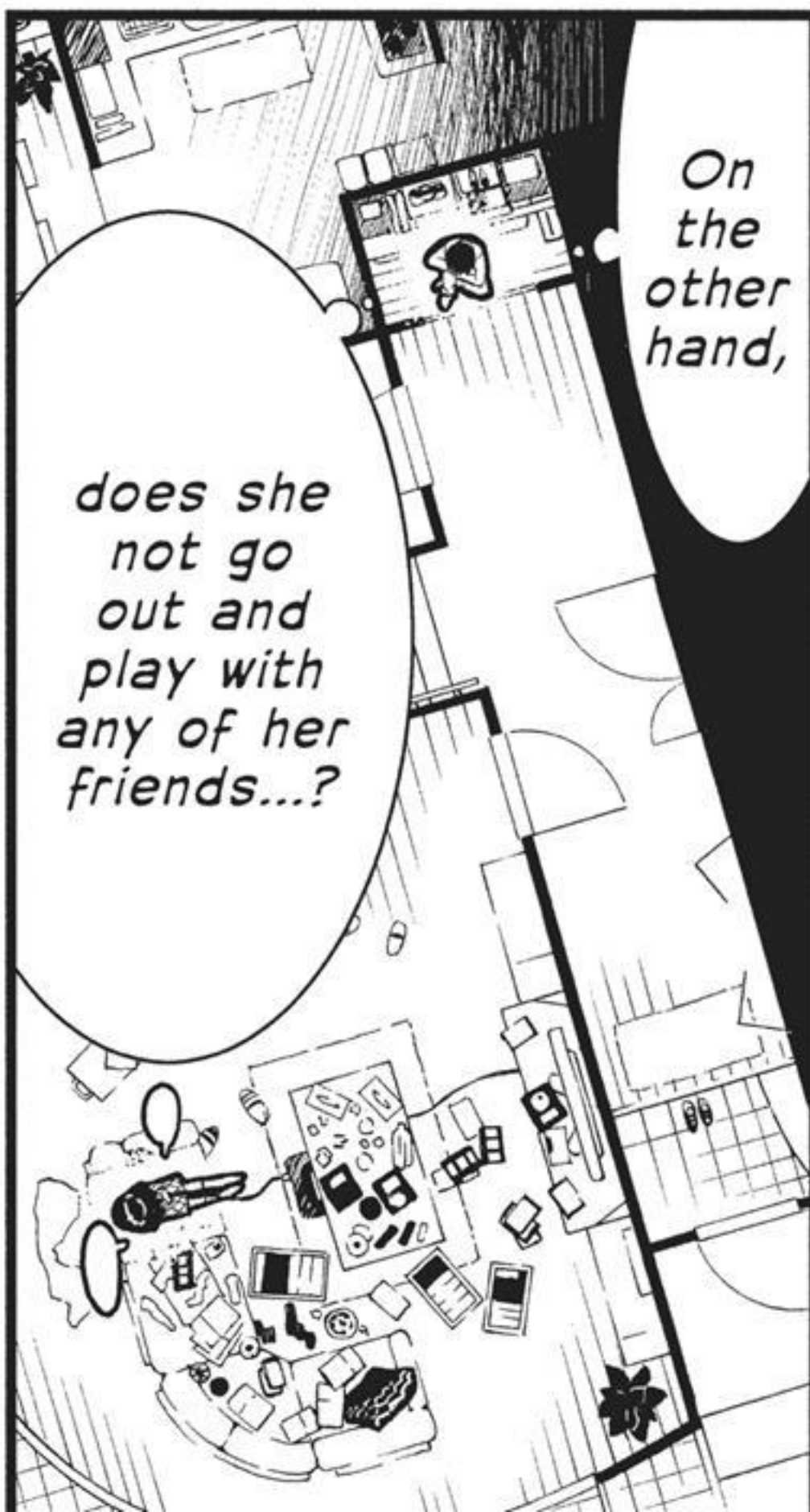


The cuts on my back that I had suffered on the first day

were healed up by then, too.

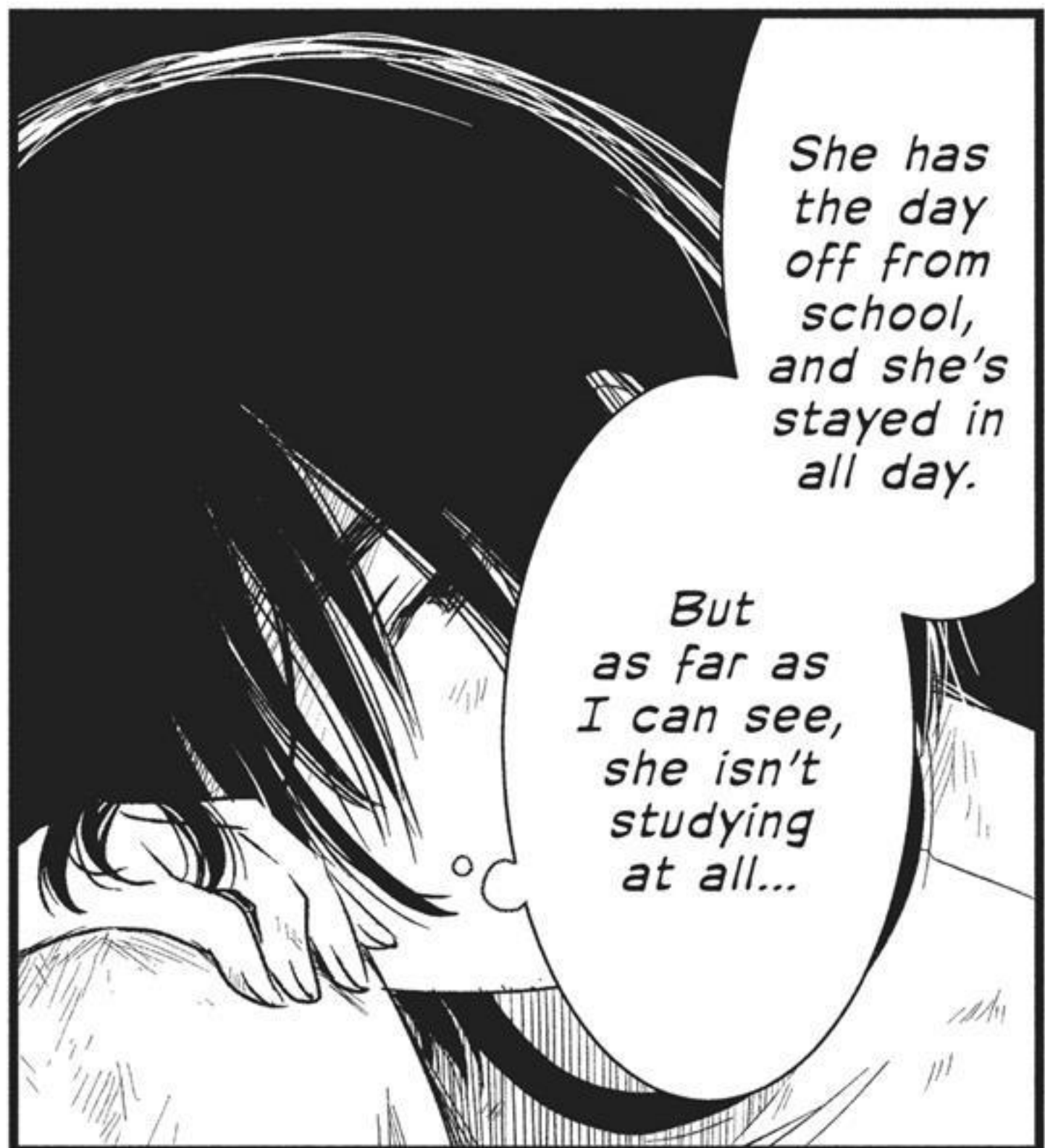


She's playing videogames in the living room?



does she not go out and play with any of her friends...?

On the other hand,



She has the day off from school, and she's stayed in all day.

But as far as I can see, she isn't studying at all...









I  
had  
a  
rou-  
tine.

I felt  
a duty  
to go to  
college  
so long  
as I was  
enrolled.

Even I  
couldn't  
stay  
there



I  
couldn't stay  
submerged  
in the warm  
clutch of  
Stockholm  
syndrome  
forever.

locked  
up  
forever.





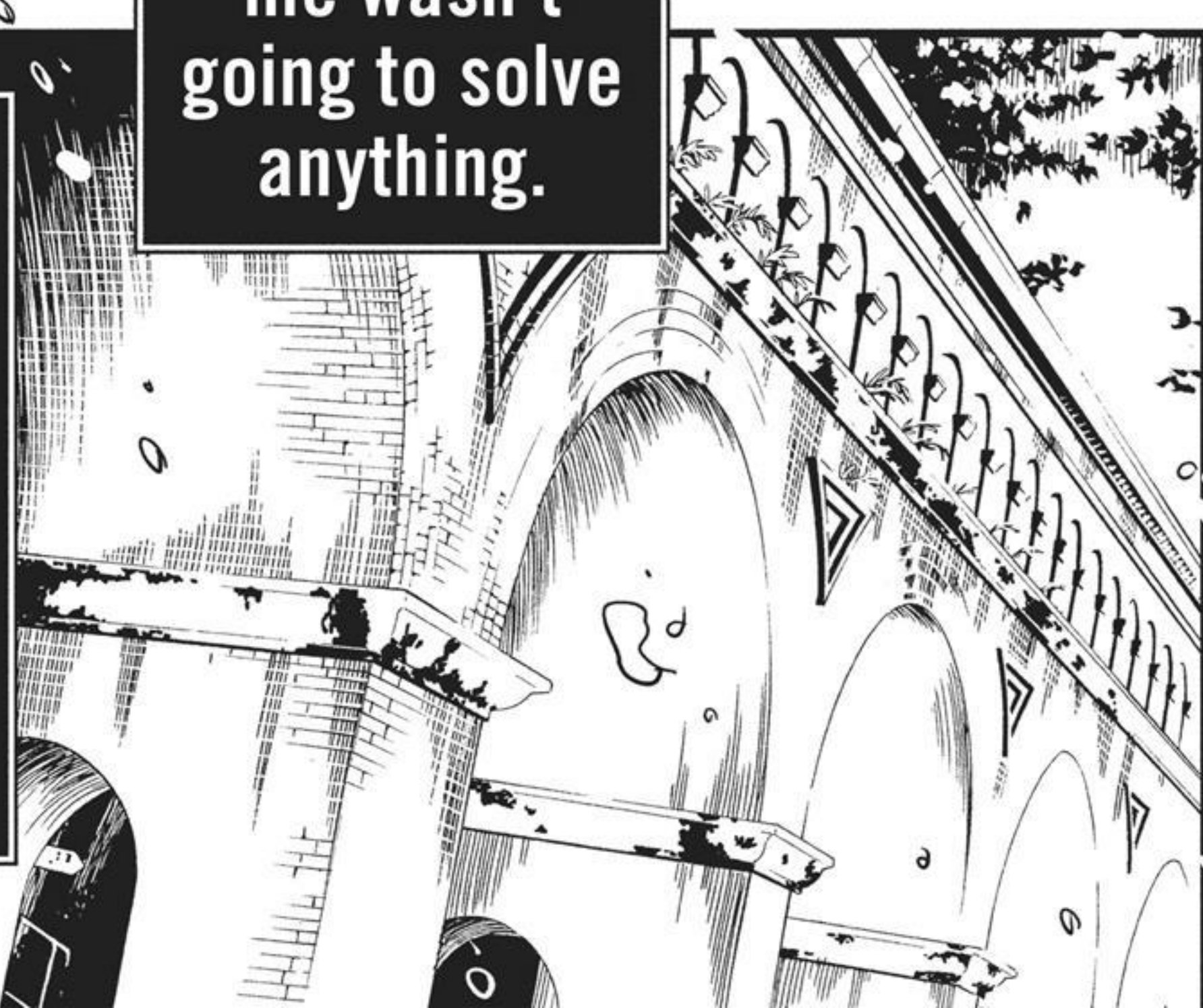
It seemed  
like both  
U and I  
were finally  
starting to  
come to a  
realization  
...



For U,  
it was the  
realization  
that  
imprisoning  
me wasn't  
going to solve  
anything.



For me, it was  
the realization  
that refusing to  
escape wasn't  
going to help U  
in any way.







Both U  
and I were  
waiting for  
the right  
moment  
where we  
could both  
say:

So  
all we  
needed

to end this  
show of a  
kidnapping,  
this dramatic  
little  
imprisonment,

was for  
a clear  
opportu-  
nity to  
present  
itself.

"I  
guess we  
don't have  
a choice  
now. This is  
over. Let's  
give up."  
...I think.

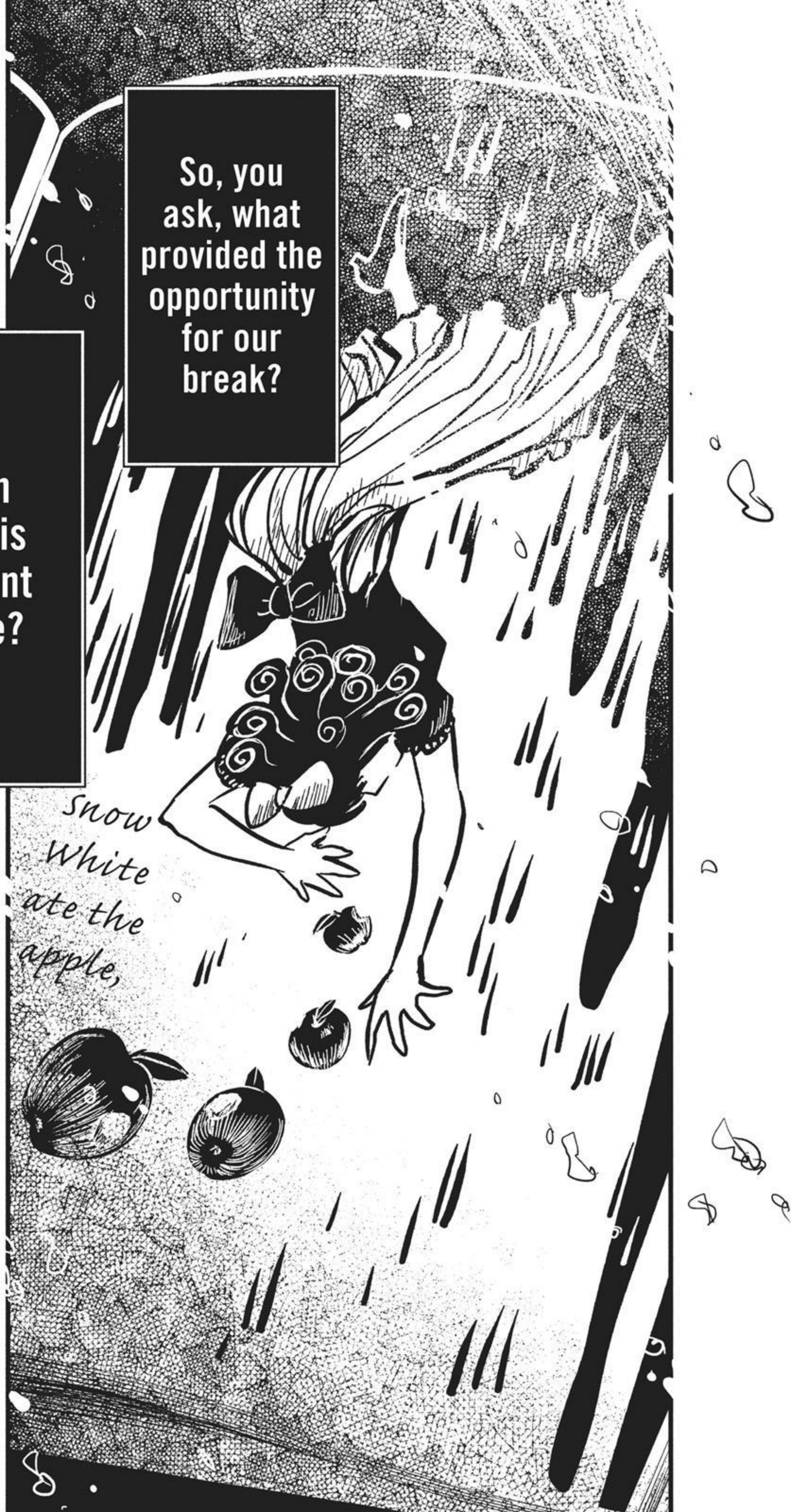


When  
did this  
moment  
arrive?

So, you  
ask, what  
provided the  
opportunity  
for our  
break?

*Snow  
White  
ate the  
apple,*

Well  
...





# Day 5 of Imprisonment

Thank  
you  
for the  
food.

RUSTLE

WAFT

Mmf...!

SHPP



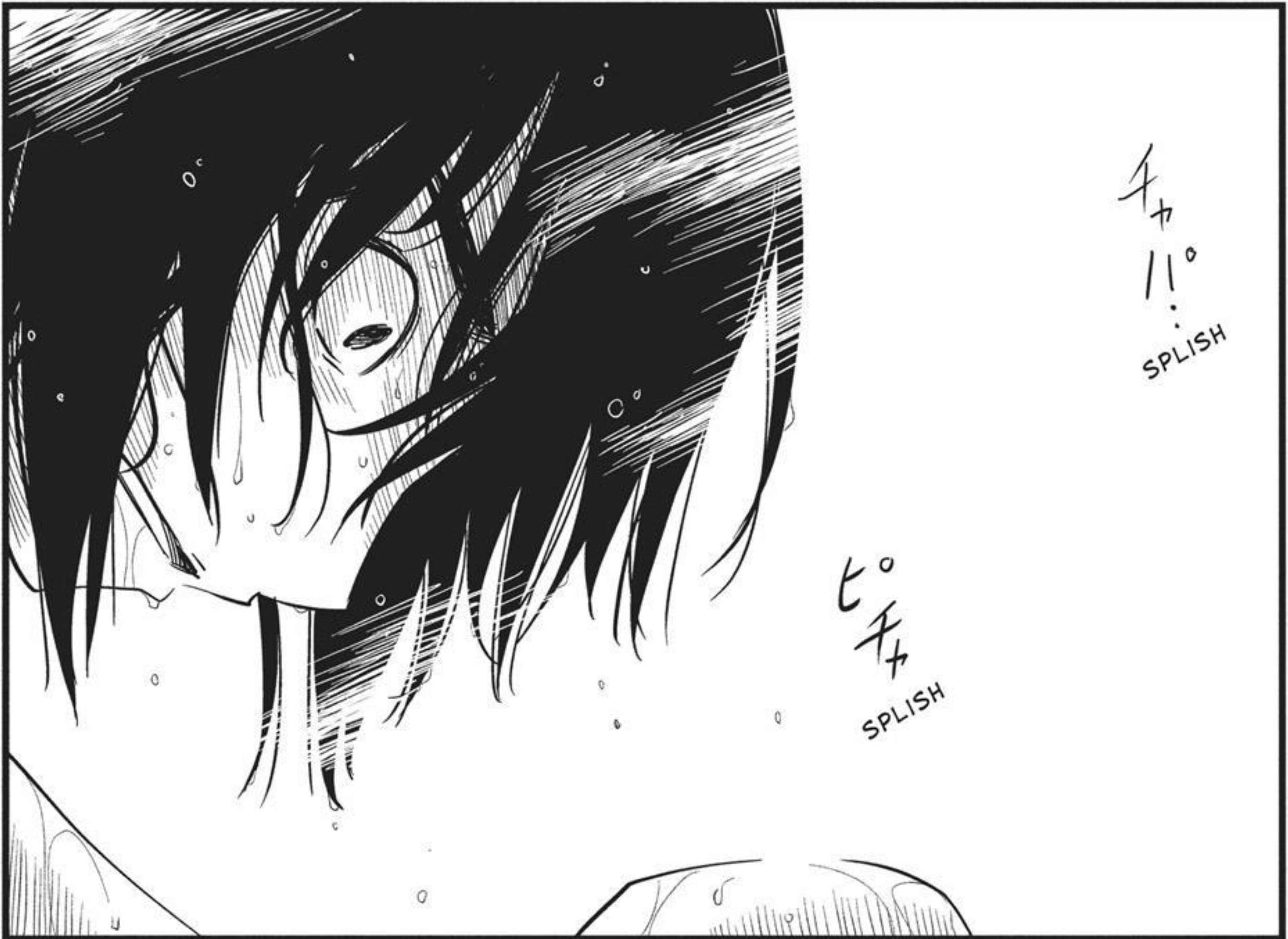




*Continued in Volume 3*



## Volume 3 Preview





**What could  
I have possibly  
done...?**

**I was  
just a  
student...  
an  
aspiring  
author.**

**What  
should  
I have  
done?**



**Everything about U is revealed.  
The scars, the knife, the unruled notebooks,  
her parents, the ancient fish...  
And what did "I" do after learning the truth...?  
U and I's week together is nearing its conclusion.  
Will there be salvation for her broken soul...?**

**Imperfect Girl 3**

**Coming Spring 2018**



## **Imperfect Girl 2**

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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Translation: Ko Ransom  
Production: Grace Lu  
Anthony Quintessenza



# Imperfect

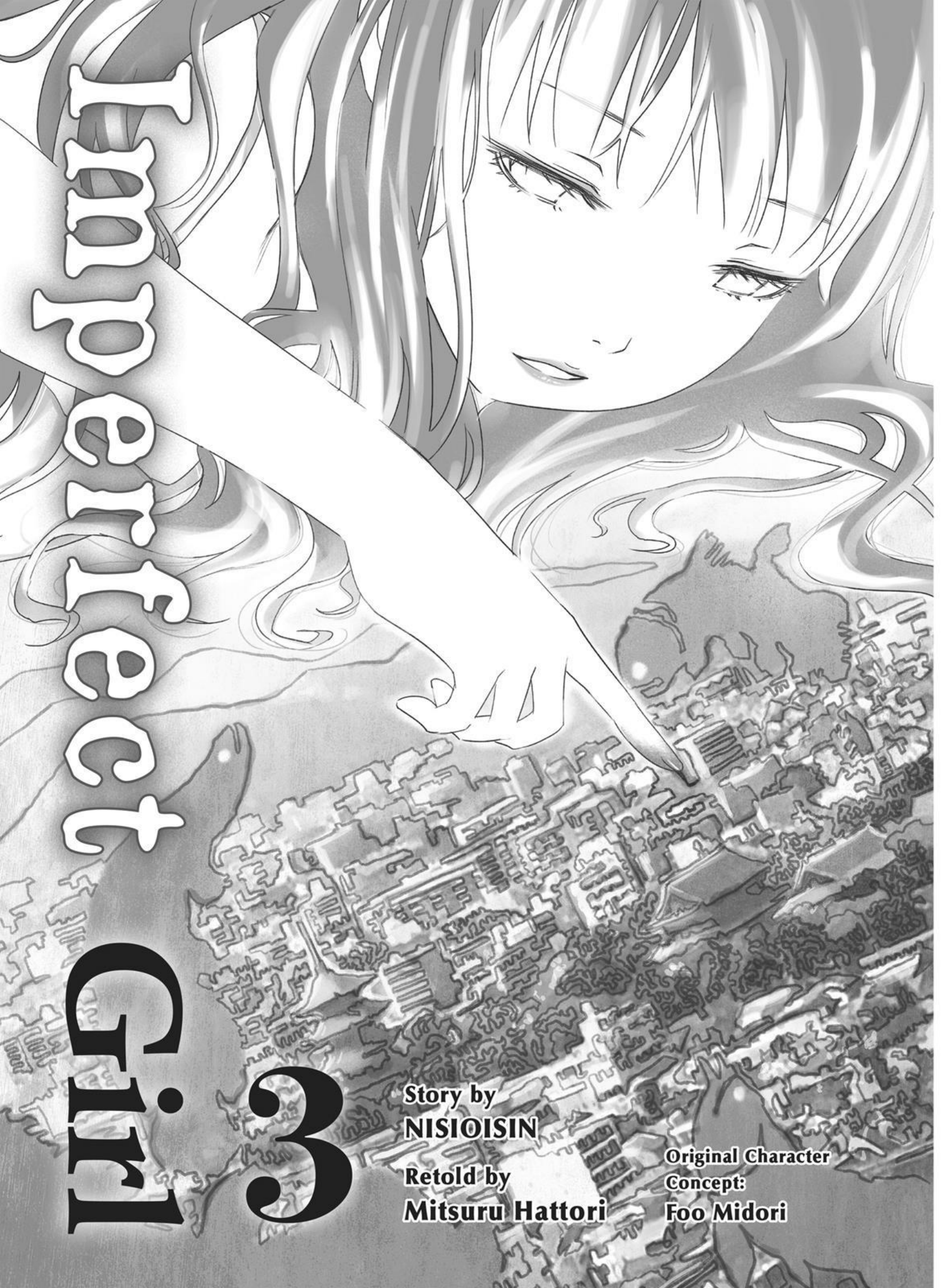
# Girl

3

Story by NISIOISIN  
Retold by Mitsuru Hattori







# Impirect

# 3

Story by  
**NISIOISIN**

Retold by  
**Mitsuru Hattori**

Original Character  
Concept:  
**Foo Midori**

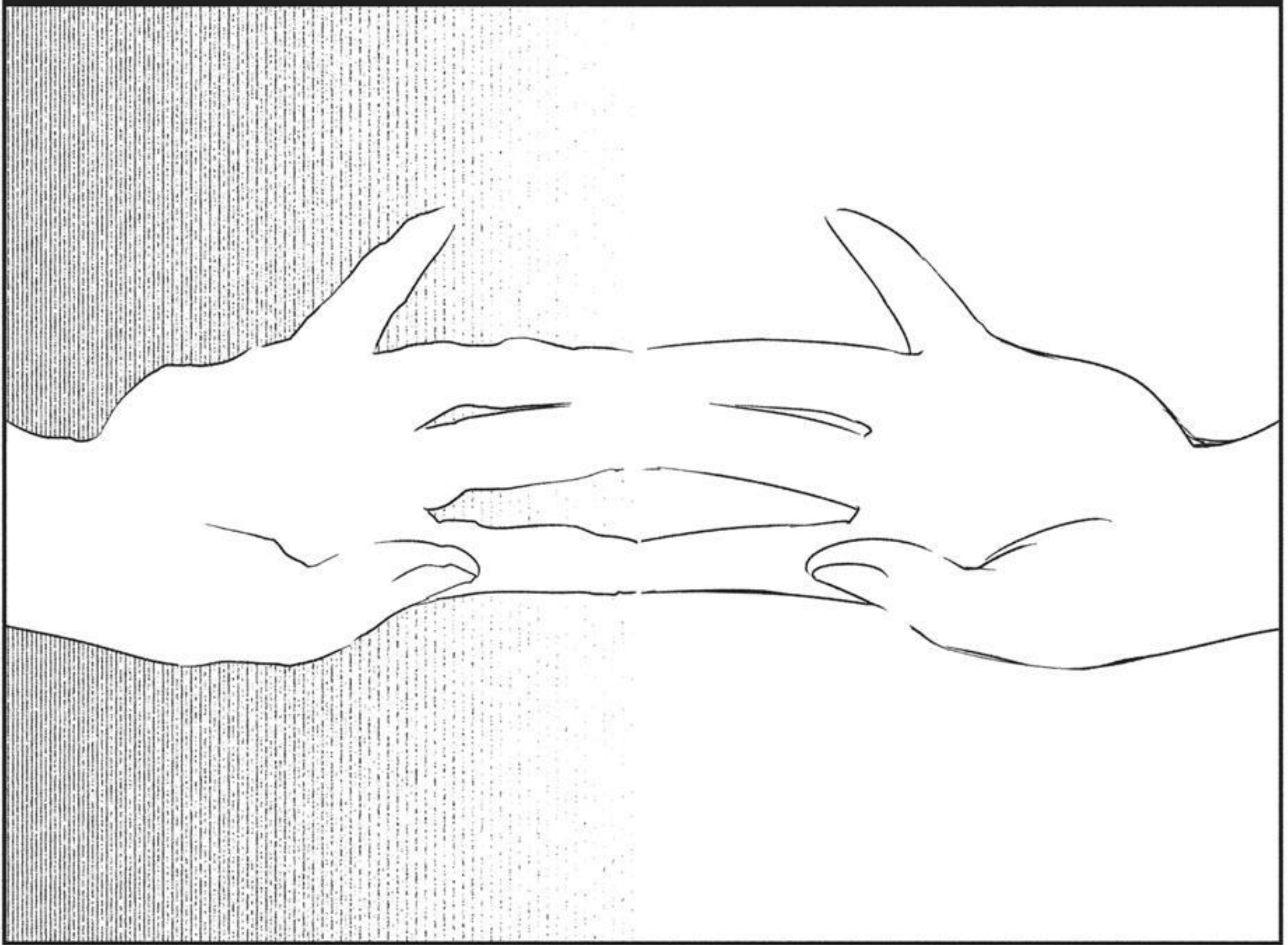
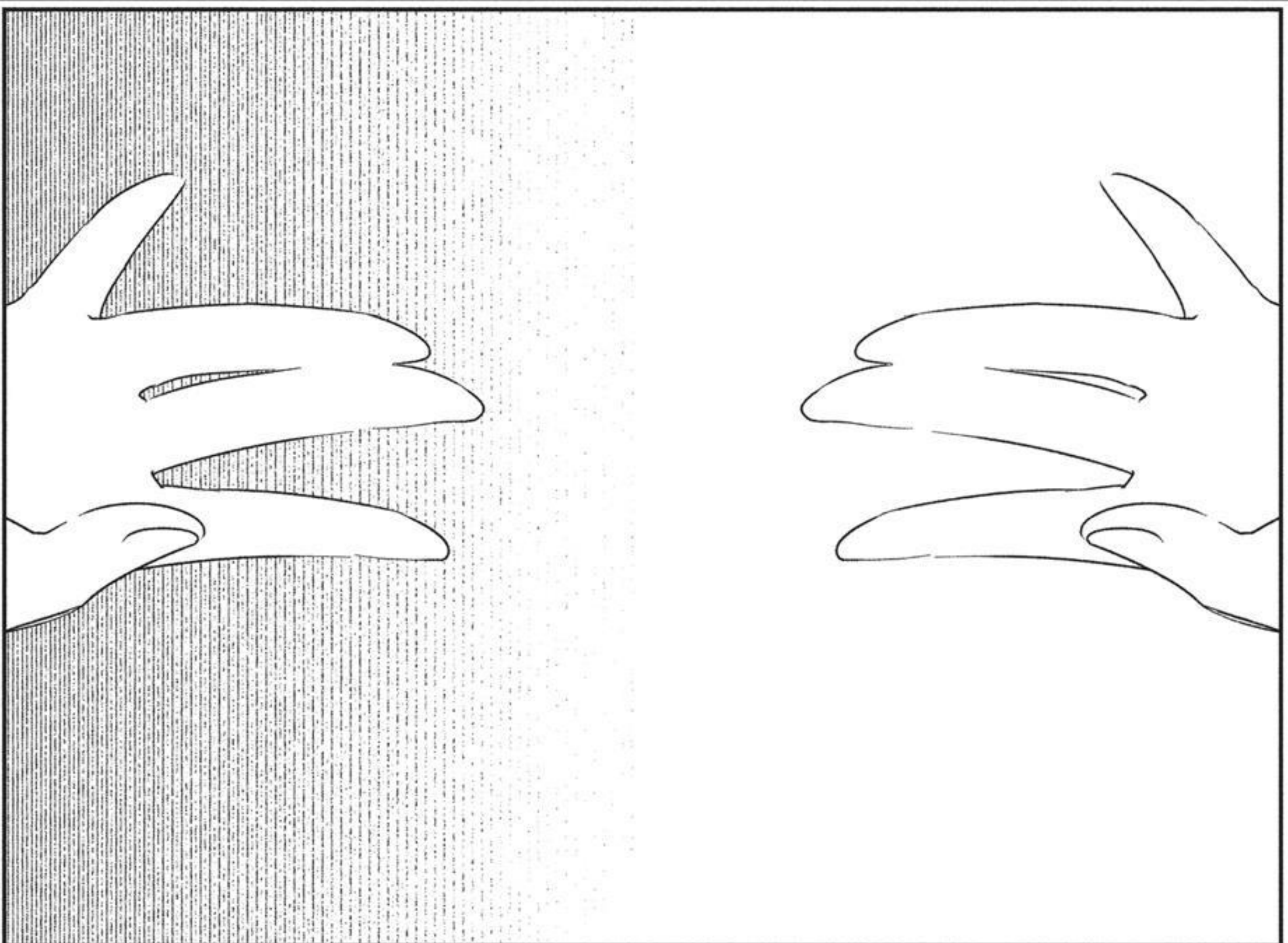


**Ten years ago.  
I was a college student at the time,  
and I had been kidnapped  
and imprisoned by U,  
a young girl in elementary school.**

**As I lived with her as a prisoner,  
I caught glimpses of her day-to-day life.  
And as I shared meals with her,  
I realized something.  
There were rules controlling this girl...**

**I was nothing more than  
an aspiring author then,  
but this was the incident that  
caused me to become an author.**











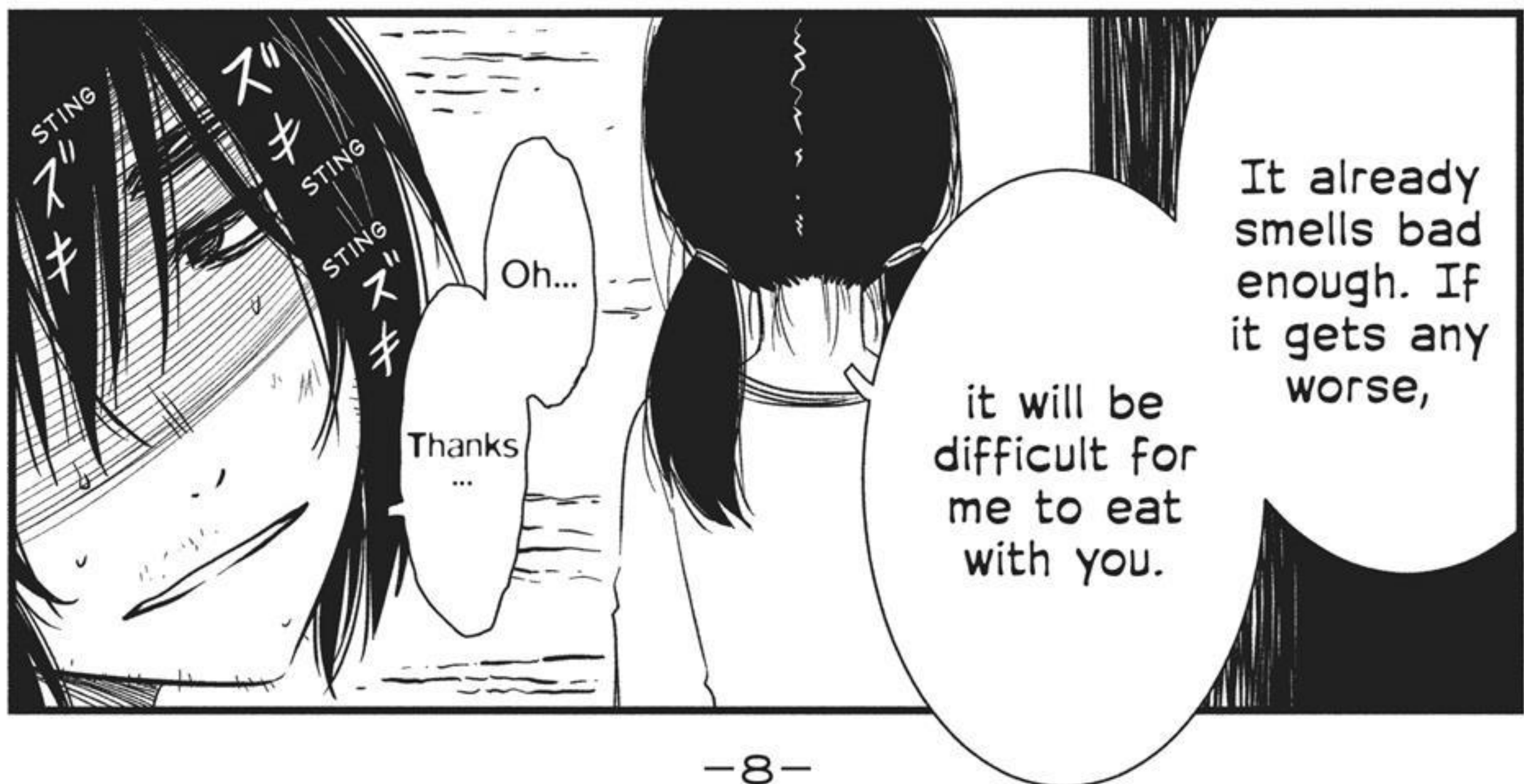




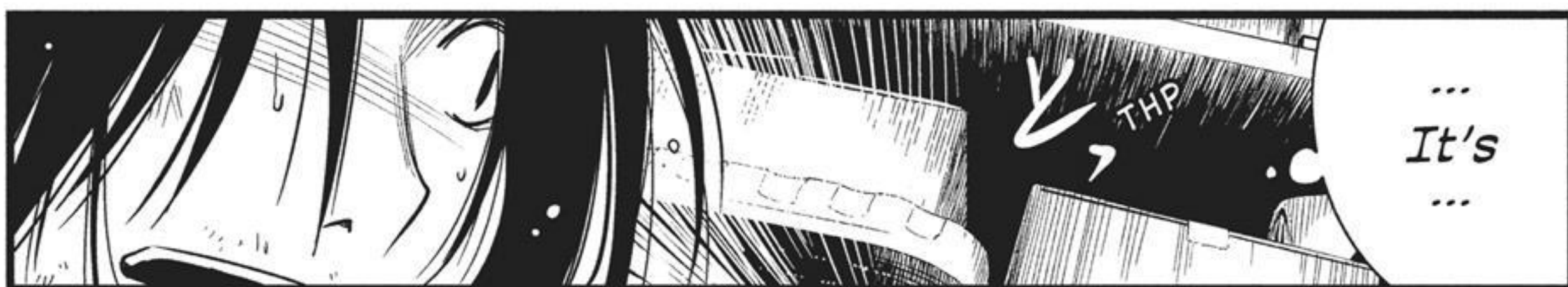
*What's scary about  
Kids is that they don't  
hesitate to tell you  
things that adults find  
hard to say...*























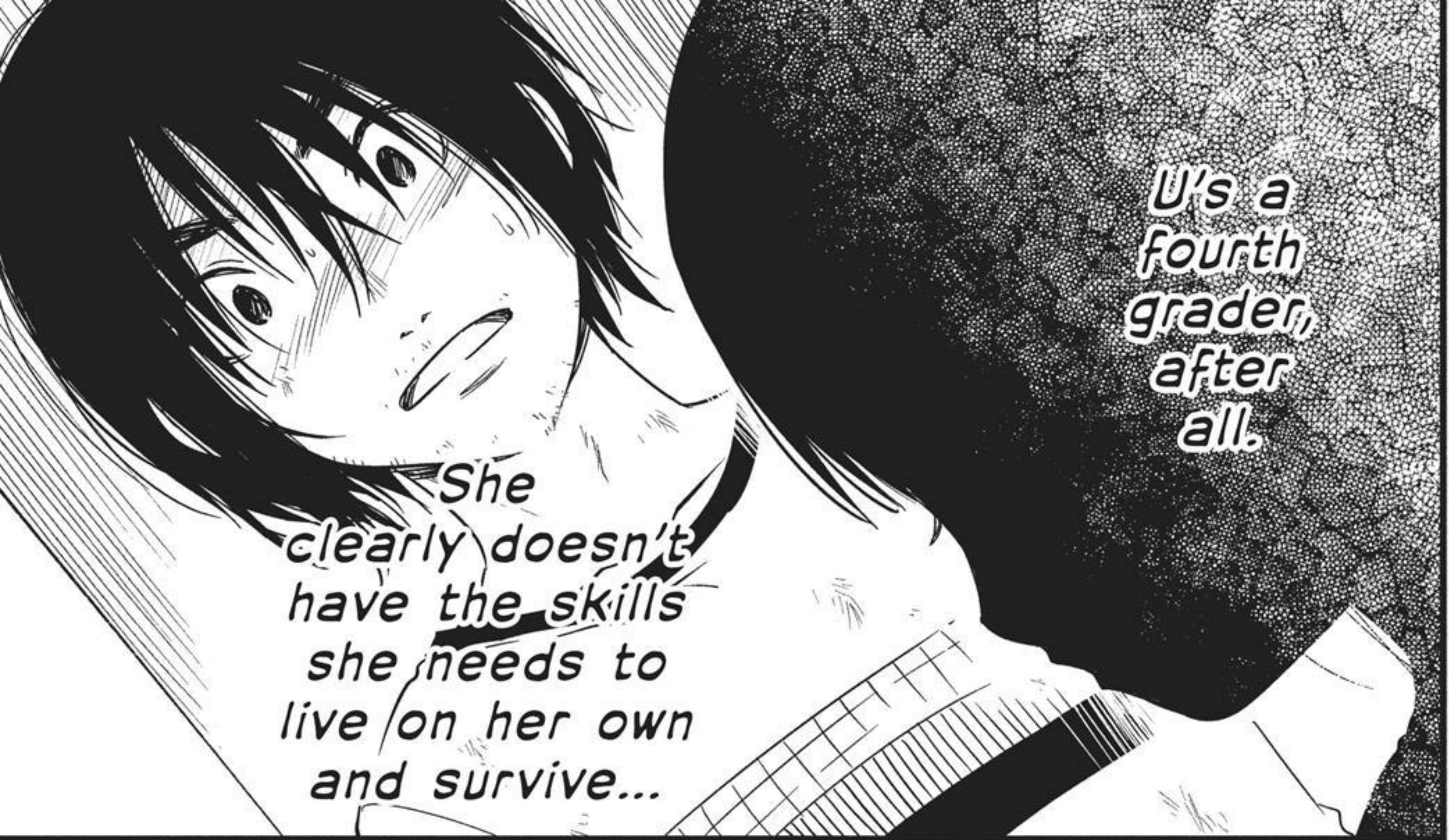
Oh...  
r-right.  
U doesn't  
know how  
to use a  
washing  
machine.

Go  
ahead.



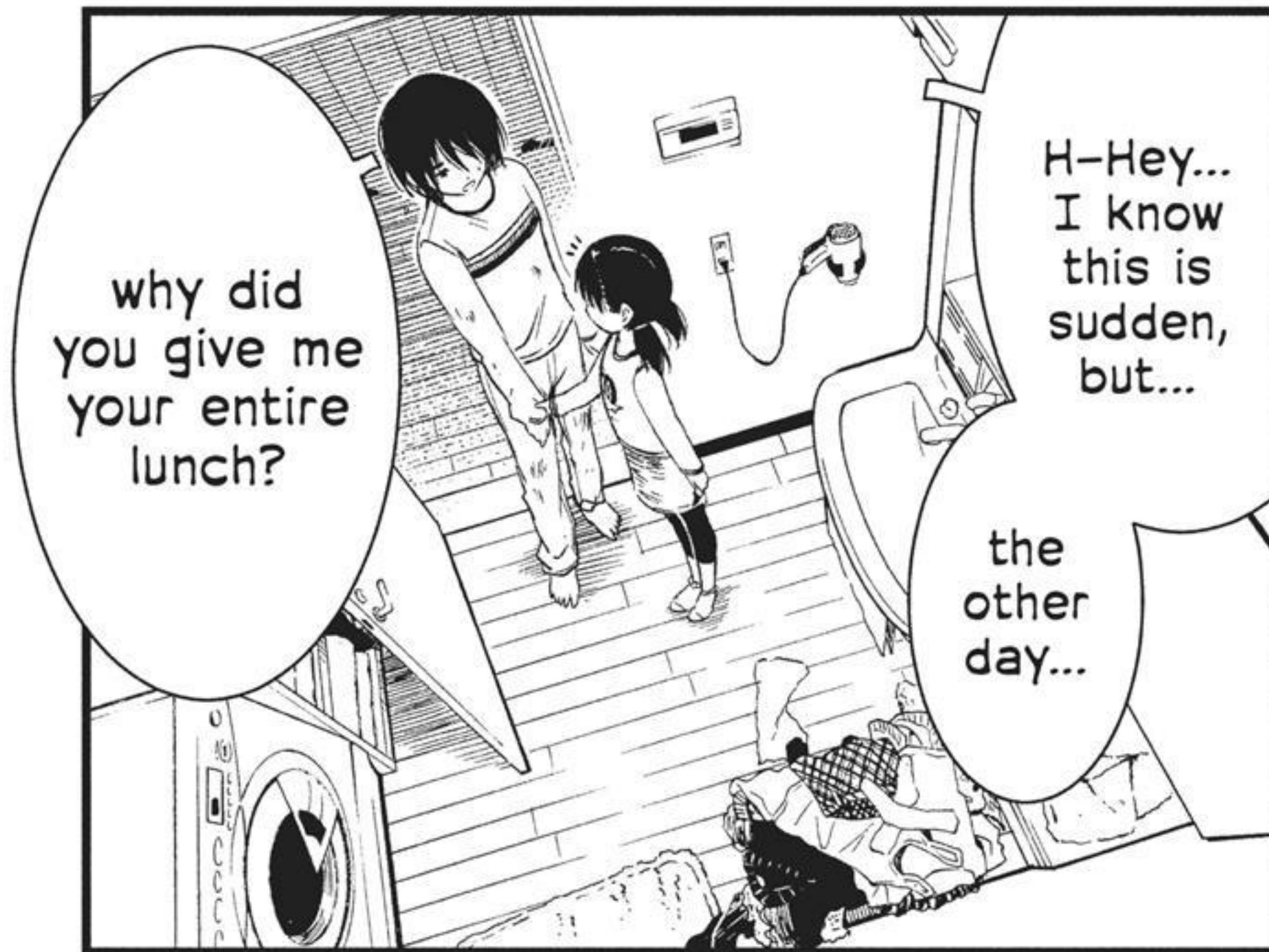
That's a  
mountain  
of  
laundry...





*U's a  
fourth  
grader,  
after  
all.*

*She  
clearly doesn't  
have the skills  
she needs to  
live on her own  
and survive...*



why did  
you give me  
your entire  
lunch?

H-Hey...  
I know  
this is  
sudden,  
but...

the  
other  
day...

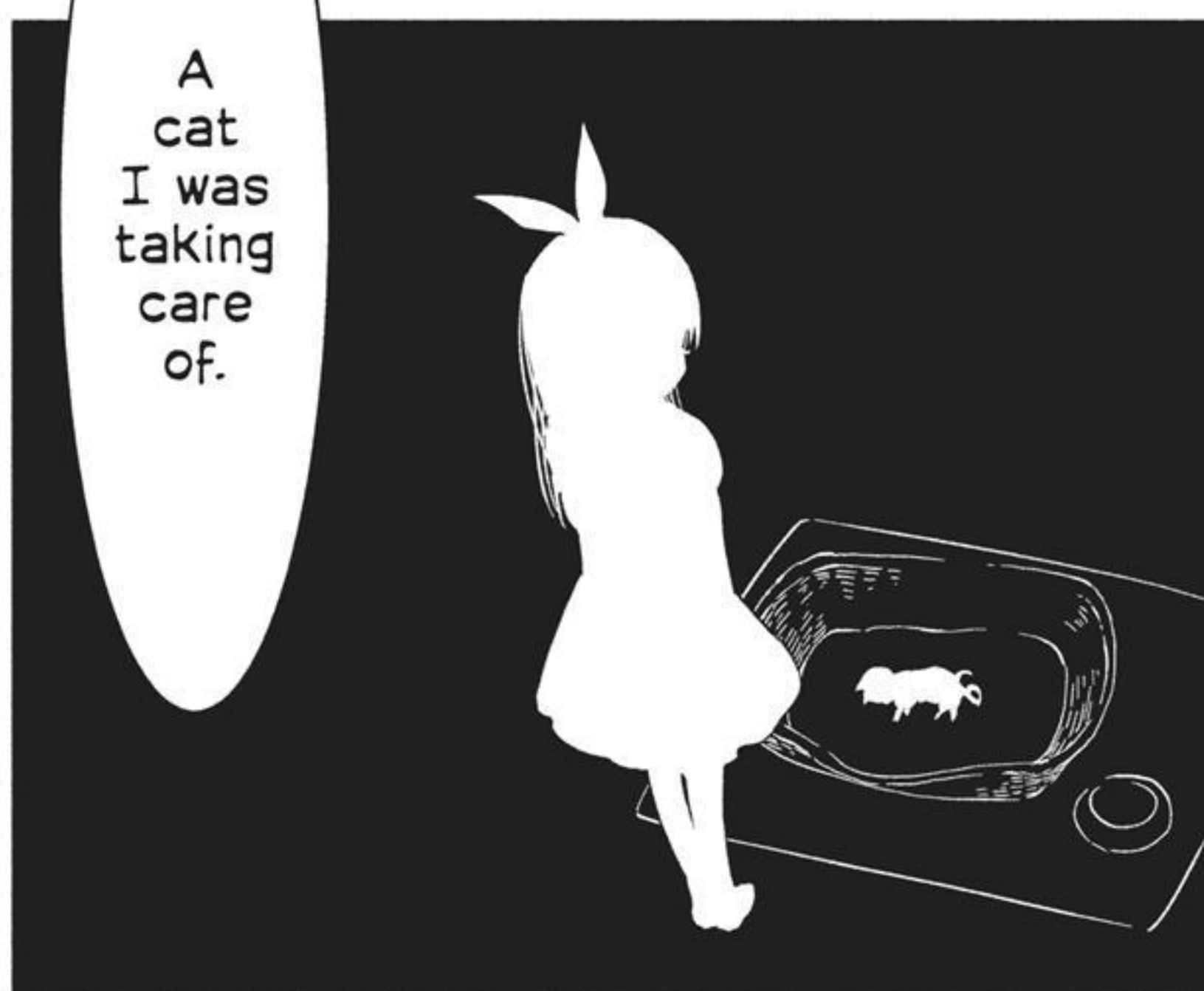


*Even  
the  
other  
day...*



Doing  
that meant  
you weren't  
able to eat  
anything at  
all that  
day...

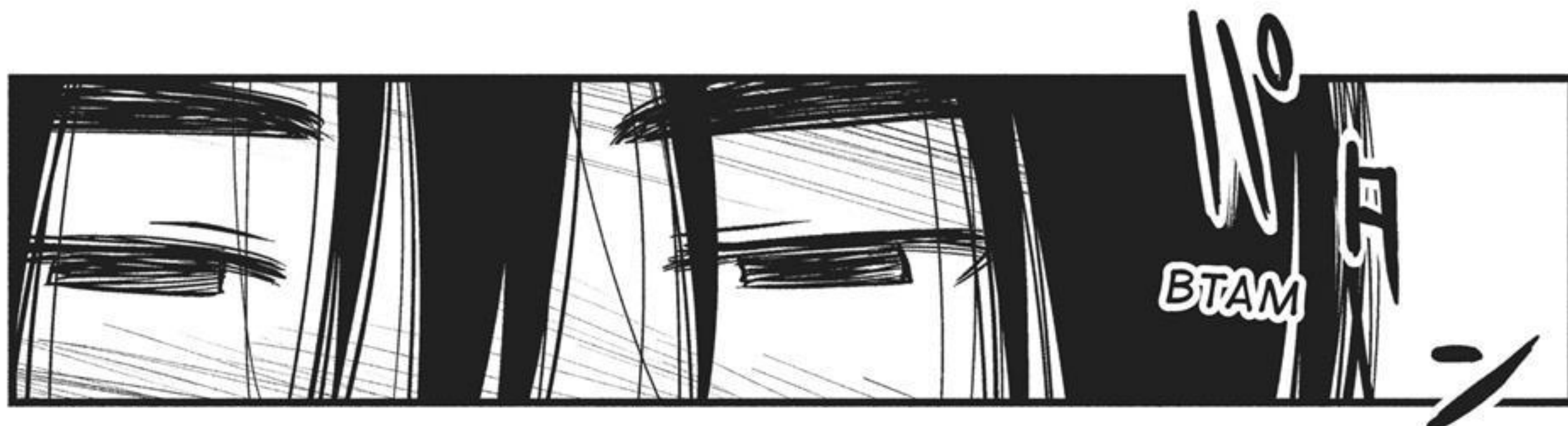










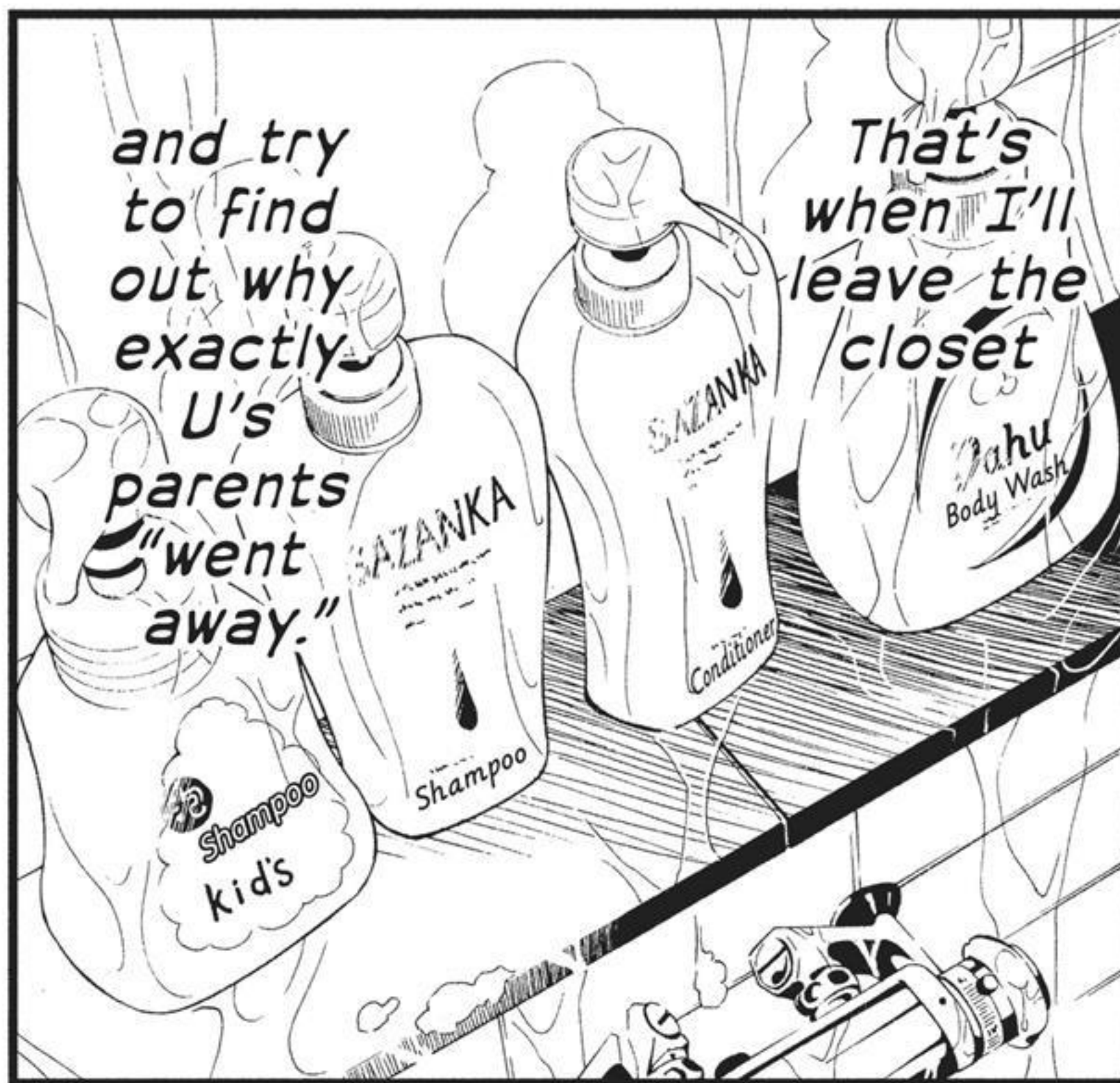


**"As your  
keeper."**

**"I  
didn't  
want  
another  
one to  
die."**







and try  
to find  
out why  
exactly  
U's  
parents  
"went  
away."

That's  
when I'll  
leave the  
closet



AAAA



I'm  
going  
to  
leave  
this  
house.

I  
have  
to  
leave  
this  
house.



But no  
matter  
what  
I find,

even  
if I  
don't  
find a  
thing,

Tomorrow  
is  
Monday...  
U will be  
going to  
school.



call the  
police or  
sneak out  
of the  
house

I'm  
not  
going  
to do  
something  
like

That  
said,

when  
U isn't  
around  
...

SPLP  
Z!

Not  
now.





talk  
to her  
about  
every-  
thing,  
and then  
leave.

be there  
to tell her,  
"Welcome  
back" when  
she says,  
"I'm home,"

I'll wait  
for U to  
return,



So  
I just  
have to  
let her  
know:


It's not  
as if it's  
impossible to  
communicate  
with her.



**You're  
doing  
something  
absolutely  
unforgivable.**

**What  
you're  
doing  
right now  
is an  
incredibly  
serious  
Crime.**





*I know I saw your  
true nature that day,  
but I promise I'll never  
tell anyone about it,  
so just let me go home.  
That's what I'll tell her.*



I had  
finally  
begun  
to see U  
as nothing  
more than  
a regular  
fourth  
grader.

and  
so had  
my image  
of her as a  
child with a  
messed-up  
head.

My  
image  
of her  
as a  
monster  
had  
faded,





✂ ✂  
CHAK //

It  
was only  
moments  
later that  
I would  
come  
to realize  
that that  
was

my  
great-  
est  
mistake  
of all...

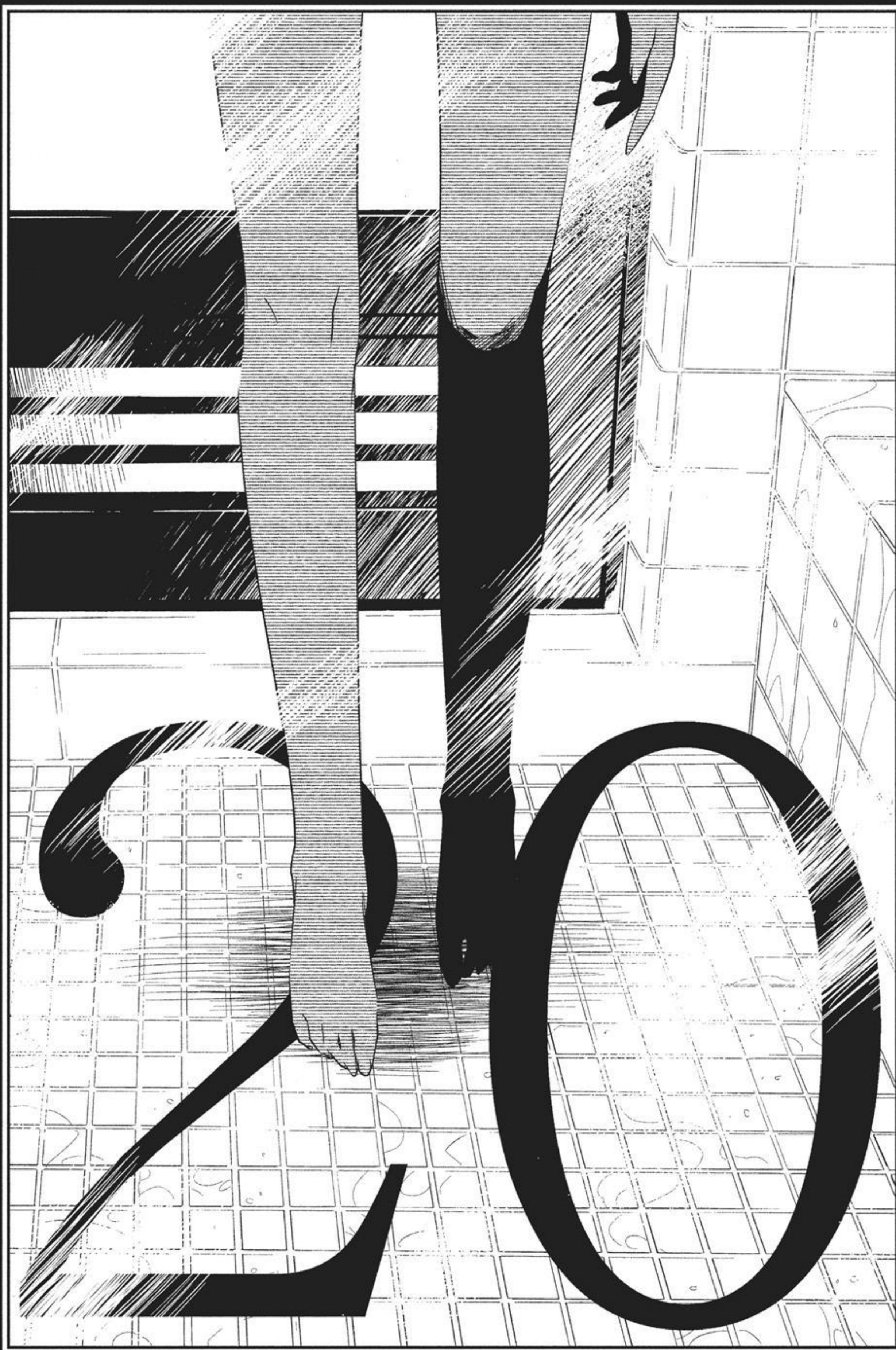






Excuse  
me.







また  
PTT

また  
PTT

また  
PTT







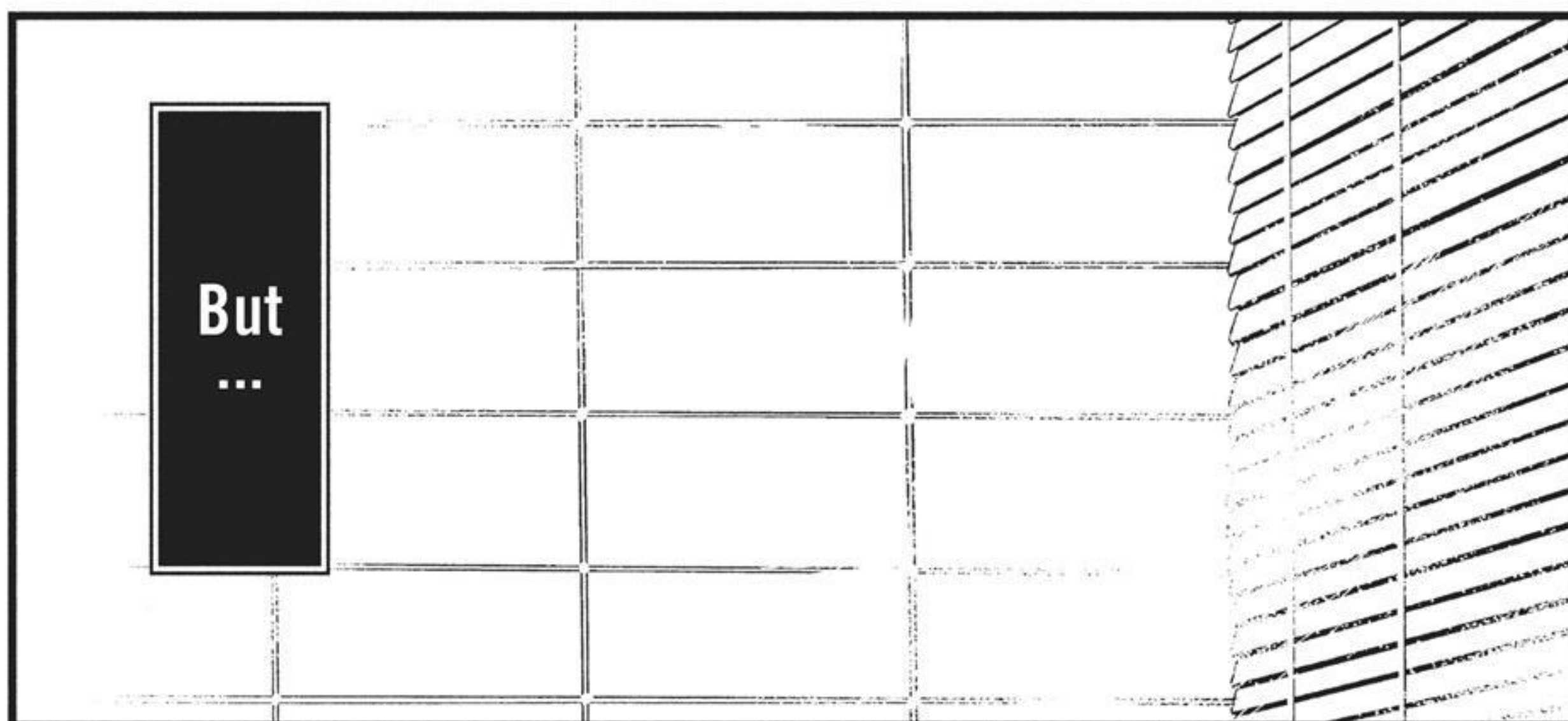
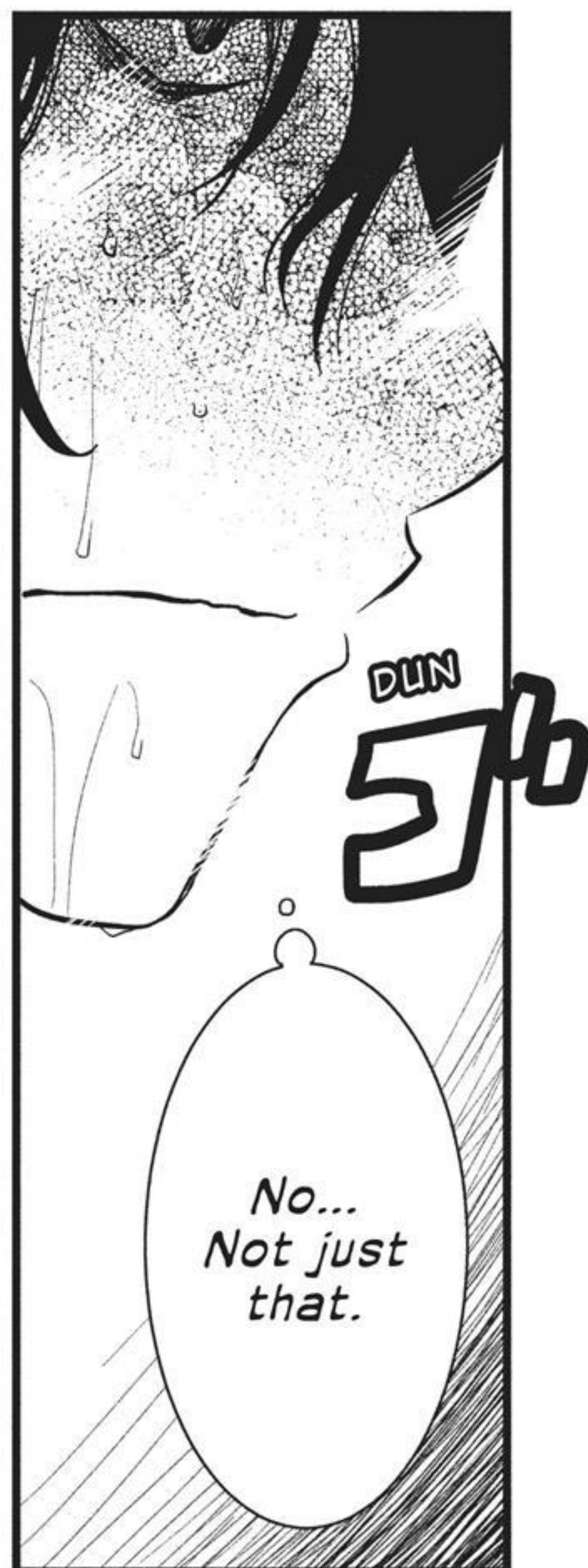
340  
DUN

To a fourth grader, of course,  
there's no difference in meaning  
between "eating together"  
and "bathing together"

It wasn't even so  
much as her being  
defenseless or  
innocent, it's  
completely natural, but











SPLASH

splash

splash









I may have  
felt a need  
for self-  
preservation  
then, but  
there was







**BADUM**



Bruises...

wound

Cuts...

...

bruise

bruise

bruise

bruise

wound

wound

wound

bruise

bruise

wound

wound

bruise

bruise

wound

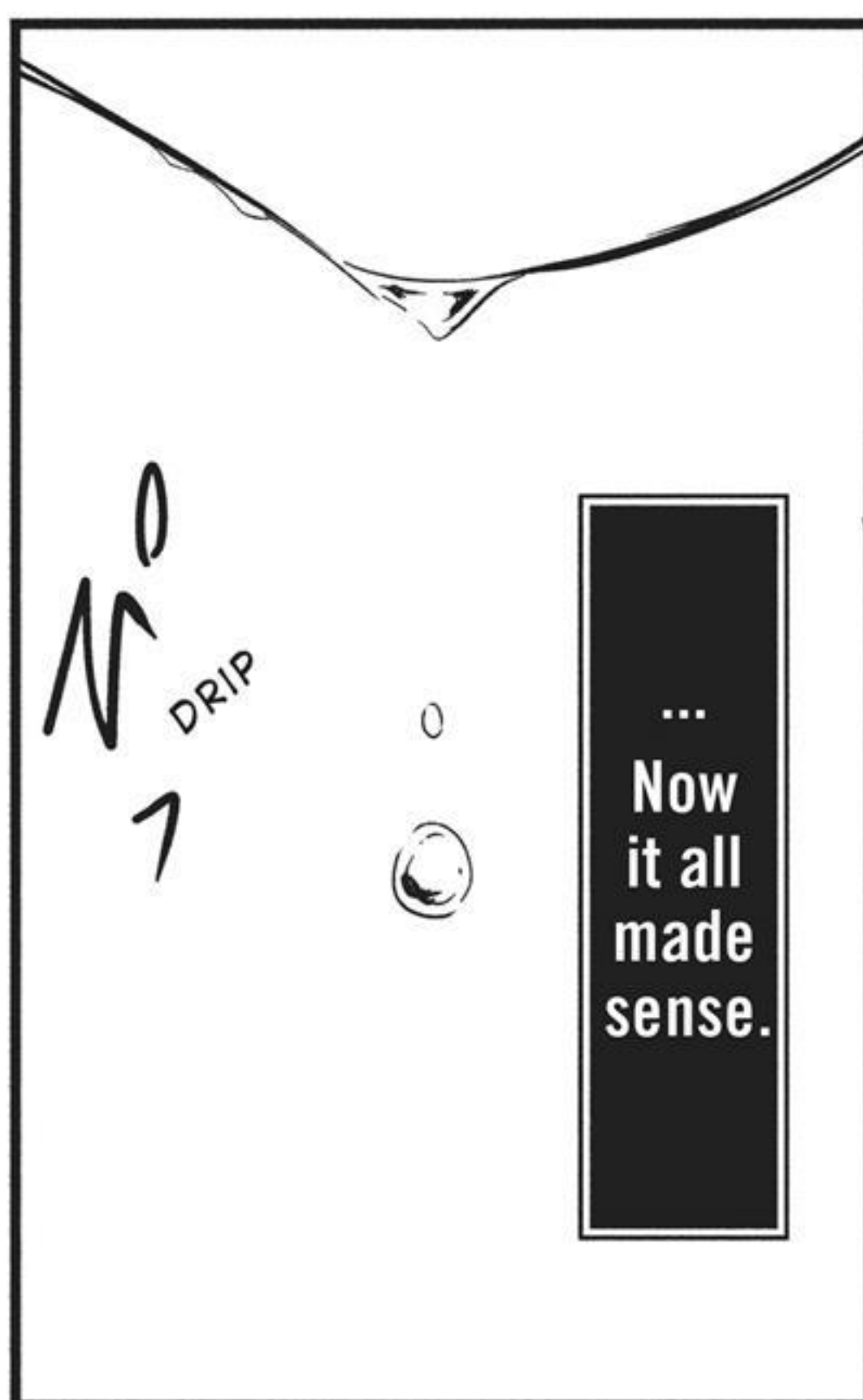
All  
over  
her  
body

...











This  
was  
how

that  
girl

every  
day  
of her  
life.  
I was  
sure.


was  
threat-  
ened  
with vio-  
lence

That's  
why  
she  
acted  
that  
way.



CHILDREN  
IMITATE

THEIR  
PARENTS.



there would  
have been  
something  
I could do.



If she  
was just a  
girl with a  
messed-up  
head,





**I  
might have  
been able  
to become  
some kind  
of hero who  
battled that  
beast.**

**Because  
then,**



**Even if  
she was a  
monster,  
that would  
have been  
better.**



**Not  
against a  
poor little  
girl.**

**But I  
couldn't.**

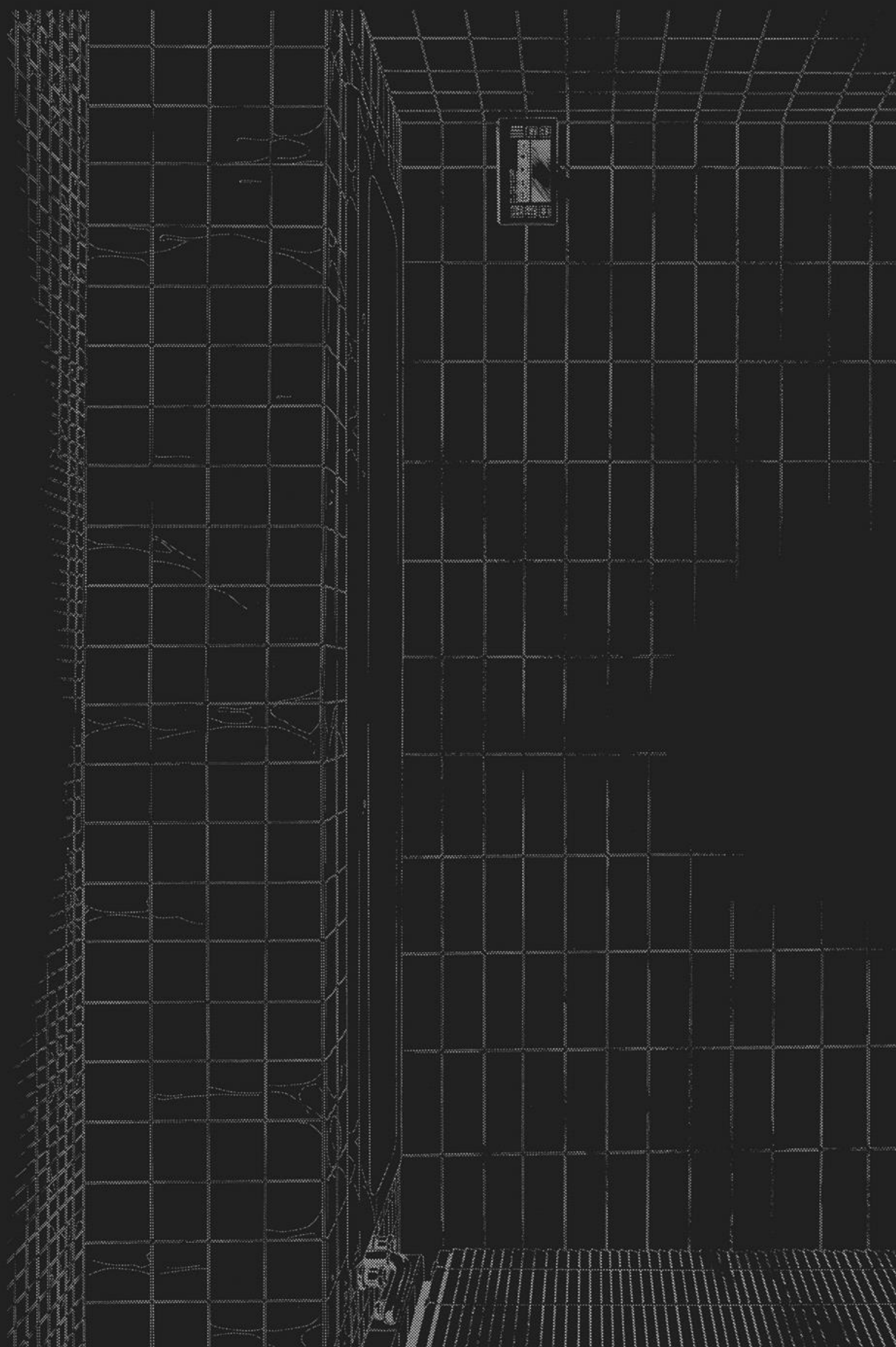




**WHAT  
ELSE  
WAS  
THERE  
FOR  
ME TO  
DO...?**

**ALL I  
COULD  
DO  
WAS  
FEEL  
SYMPATHY  
AND  
PITY.**













**What  
should  
I have  
done?**



**I should  
have  
gotten out  
of the  
bath and  
turned on  
my cell  
phone.**



**It's clear  
as day  
from here,  
ten years  
after the  
fact, where  
I'm able  
to calmly  
think  
about it.**







To  
call a  
Child  
Welfare  
Office.

Not to  
call the  
police, of  
course.

But the  
systems in  
Japan that  
recognize  
abuse for  
what it is  
had yet to  
be fully  
realized at  
that point.

Yes, it  
was a  
case  
of  
abuse.

But I  
can only  
say that  
because  
I'm writing  
from ten  
years  
in the  
future.







*a college  
student  
aspiring to  
become an  
author.*

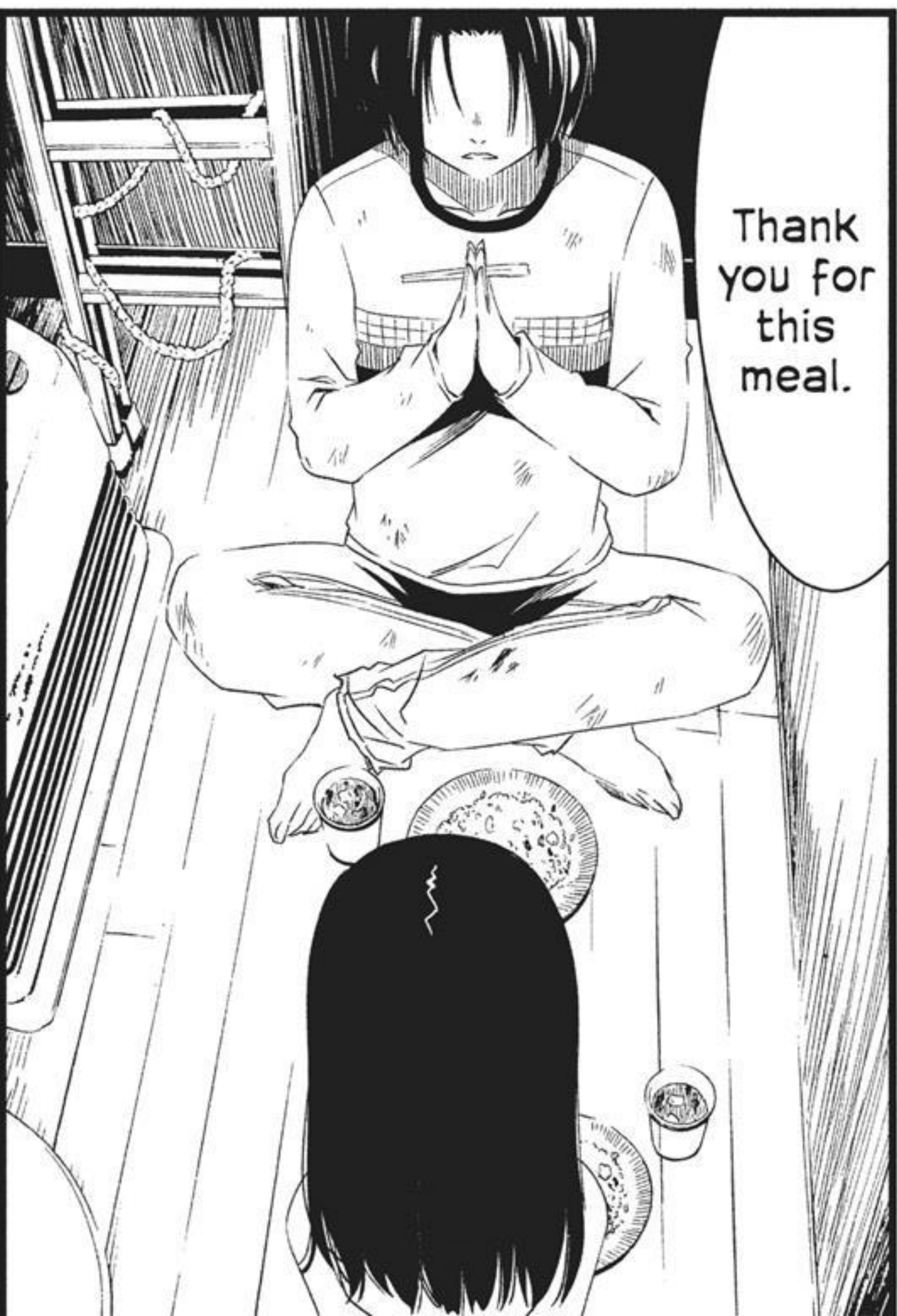
*I'm  
just...*

*What  
could  
I...  
possibly  
do...?*

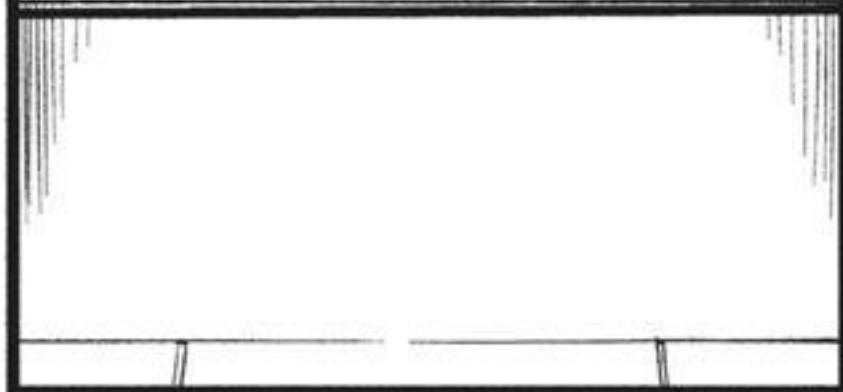
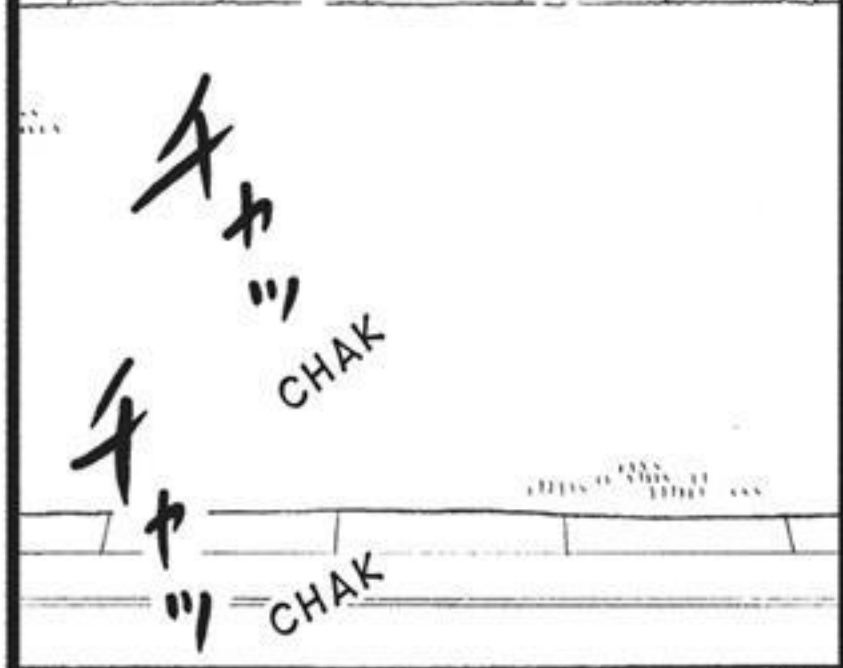
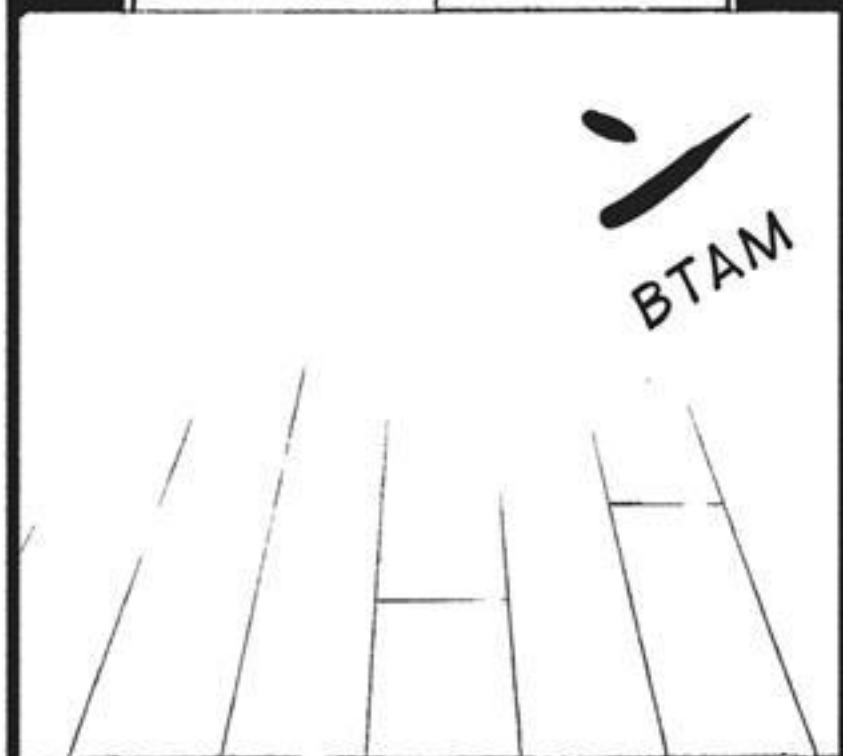
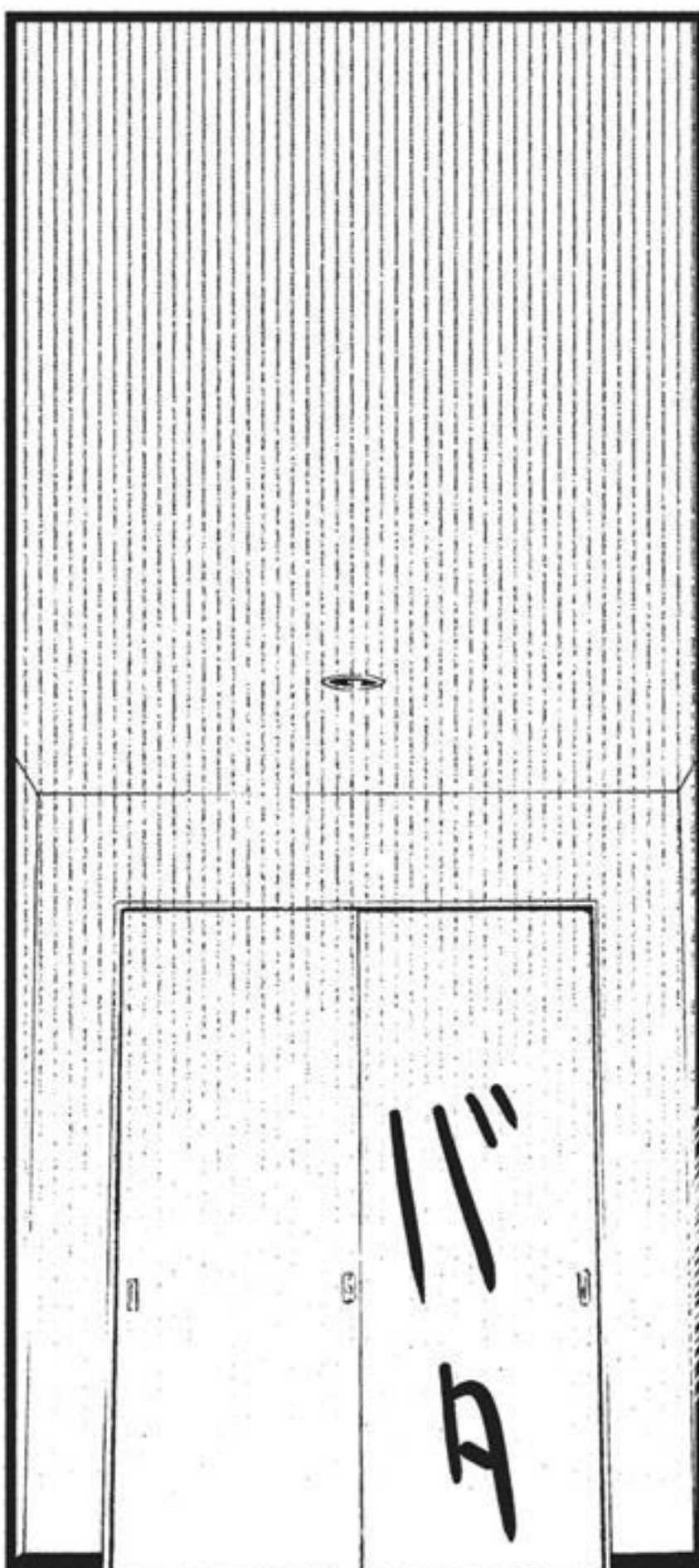




# Day Six of Imprisonment



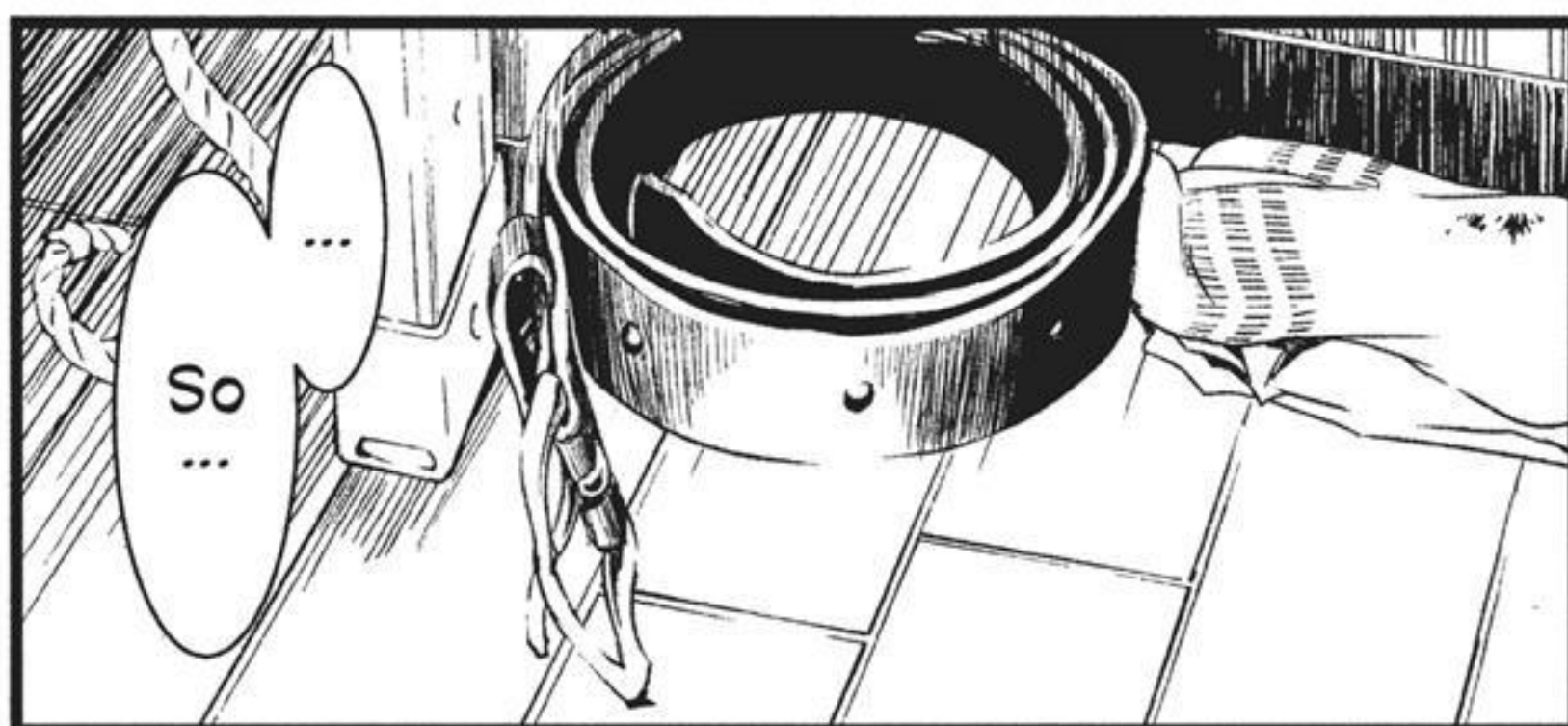








**GARBAGE**





ZMM  
Z

ZMM  
Z

If  
you want  
to call me  
despicable,

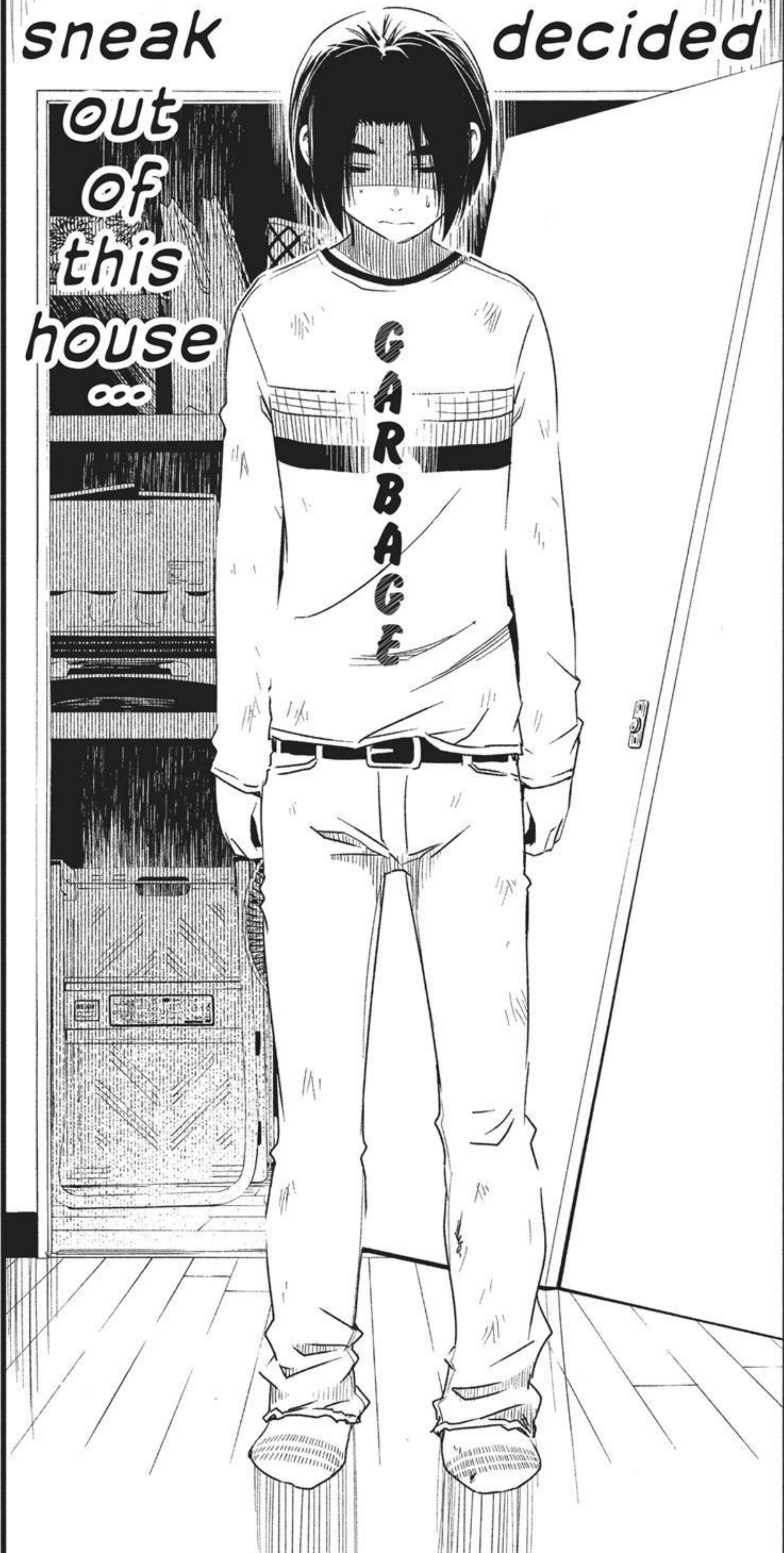
ZMM  
Z

go  
ahead.

to  
sneak

I've  
decided

out  
of  
this  
house  
oo







THEN  
THESE  
ARE MY  
TRUE  
COLORS  
....!

IF YOU  
CAN TELL  
SOMEONE'S  
TRUE COLORS  
BY THE WAY  
THEY ACT  
WHEN THEY'RE  
CORNERED,



AND  
LEAVE  
BEHIND  
A LITTLE  
GIRL  
WHOSE  
BODY IS  
COVERED  
IN FRESH  
WOUNDS...

BUT  
...



I...  
CAN'T  
TAKE  
ANY  
MORE  
....!

NO  
MATTER  
HOW I  
LOOK AT THE  
SITUATION,  
SOLVING THIS  
FAMILY'S  
PROBLEMS  
IS TOO MUCH  
FOR ME TO  
HANDLE  
ON MY  
OWN...

I MIGHT  
REGRET IT  
FOR THE  
REST OF MY  
LIFE IF I RUN  
AWAY FROM  
HERE



**FOR  
THE  
REST  
OF MY  
LIFE!!**

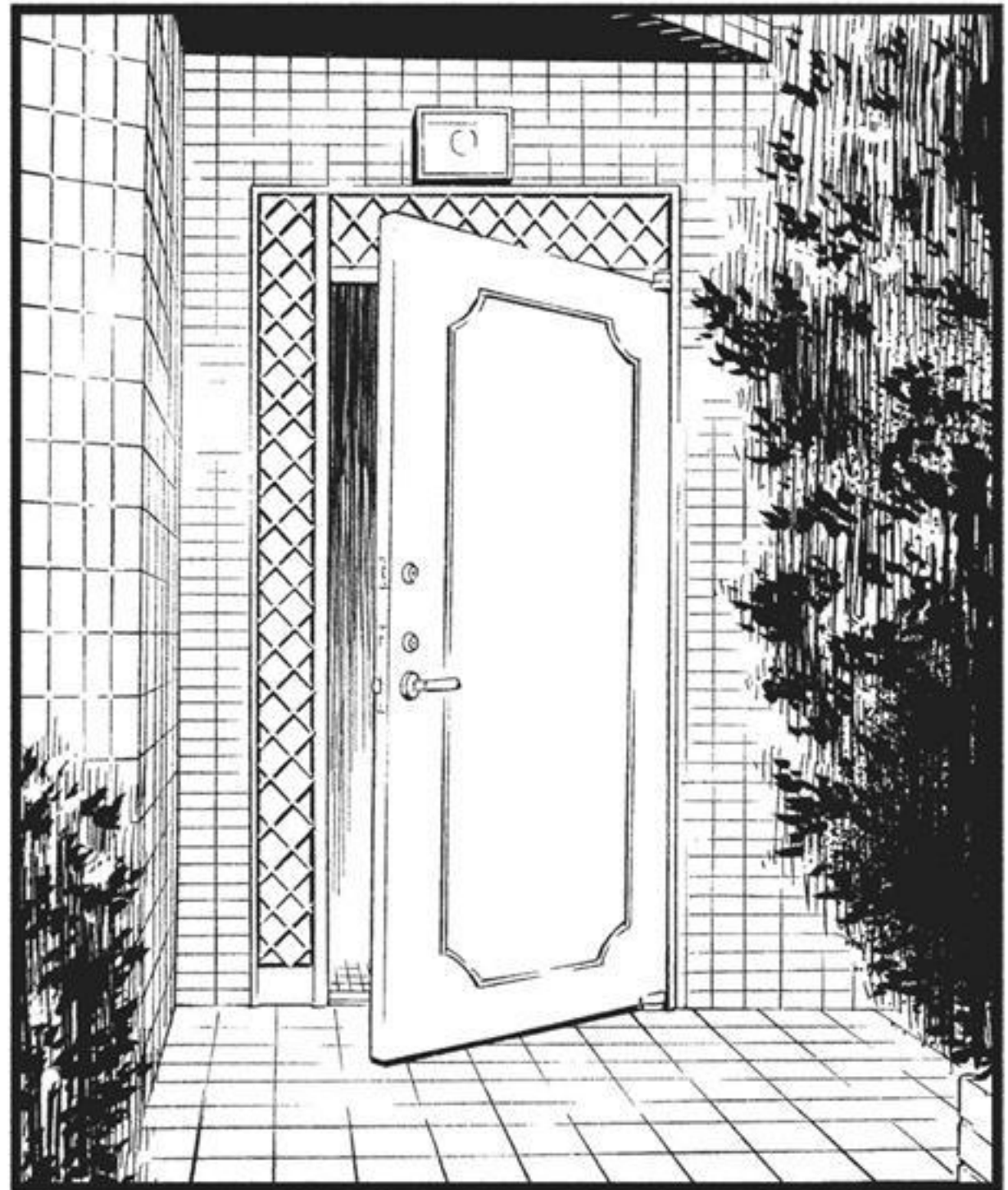
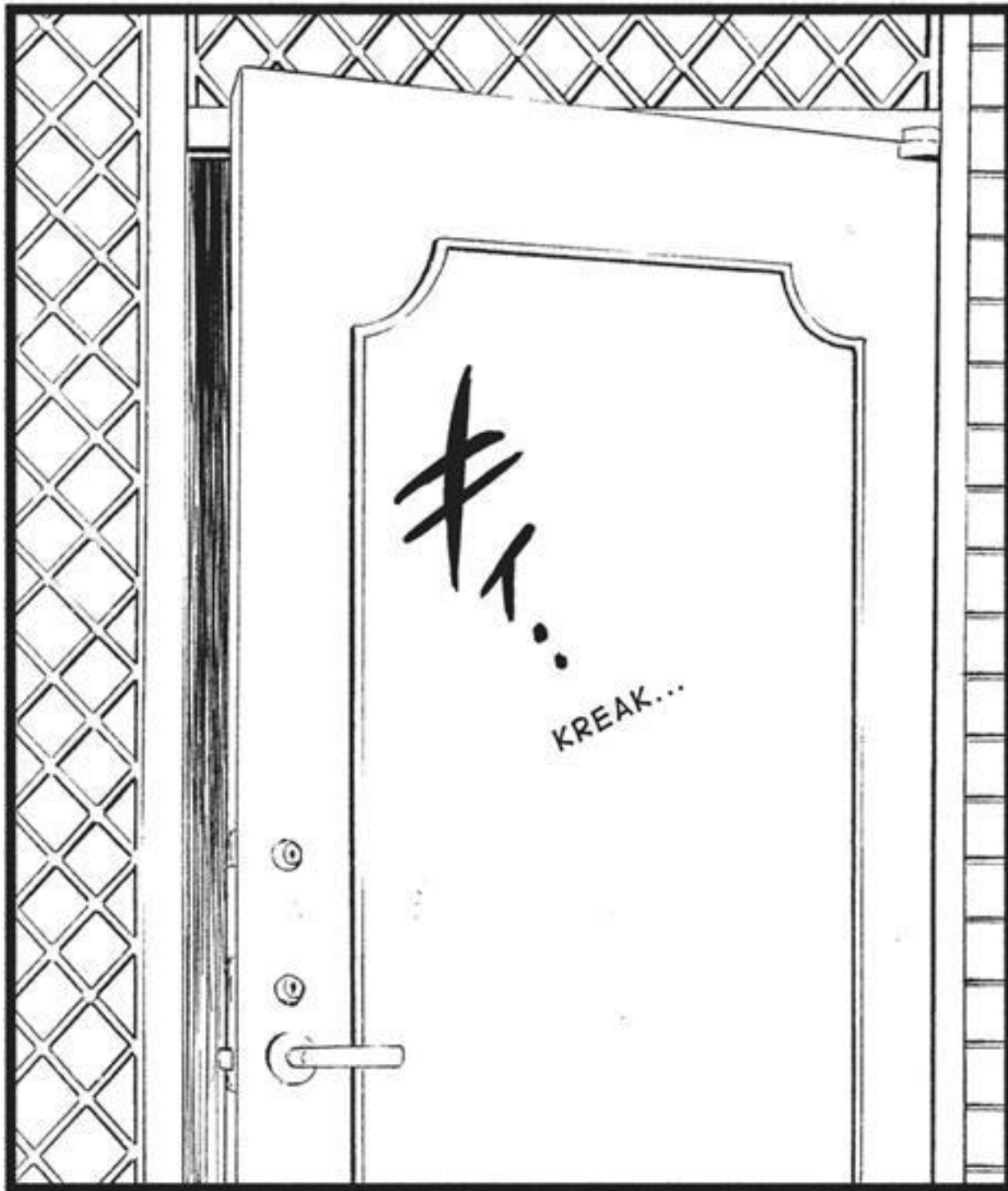
**I'D  
RATHER  
REGRET.  
THIS**



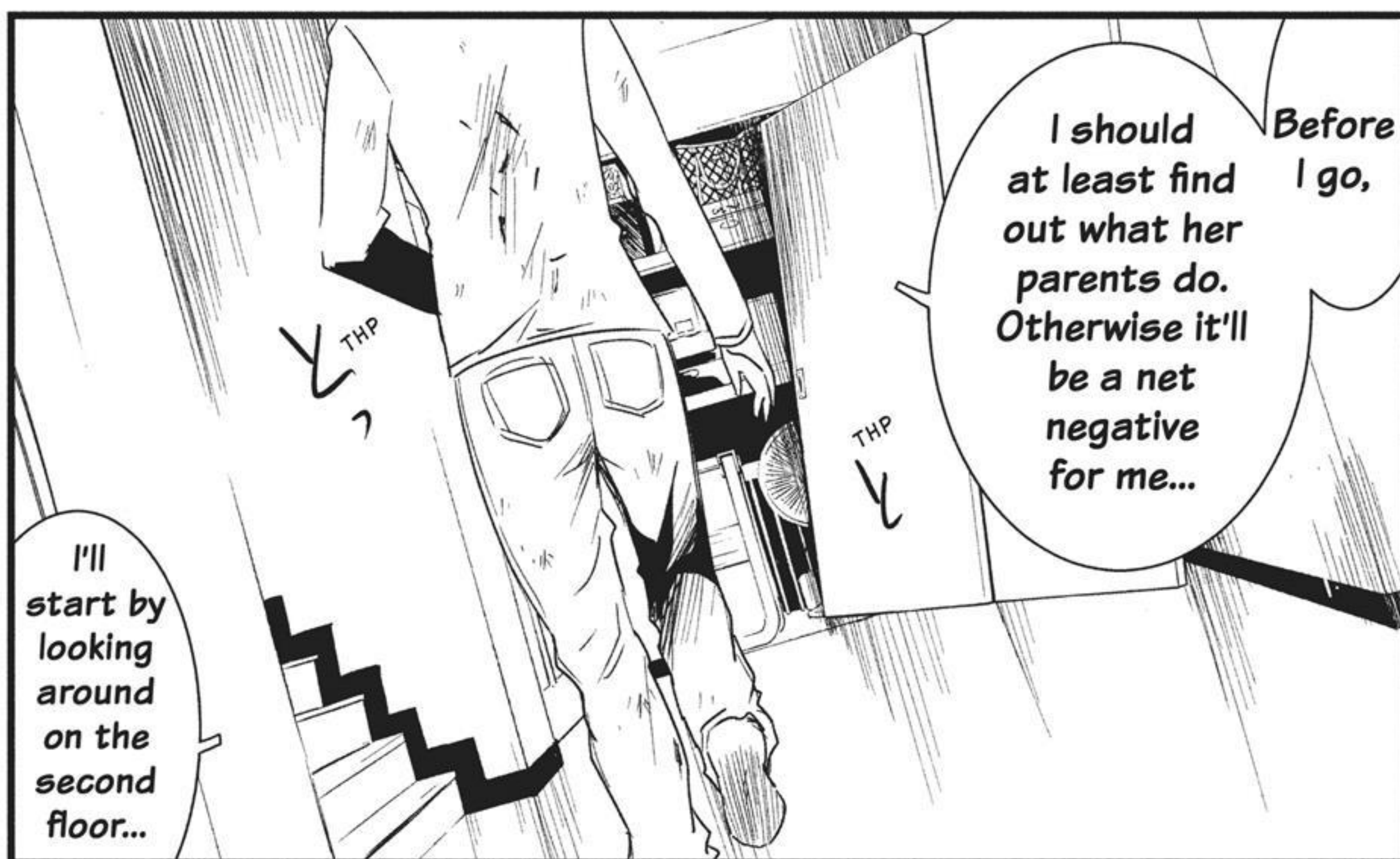




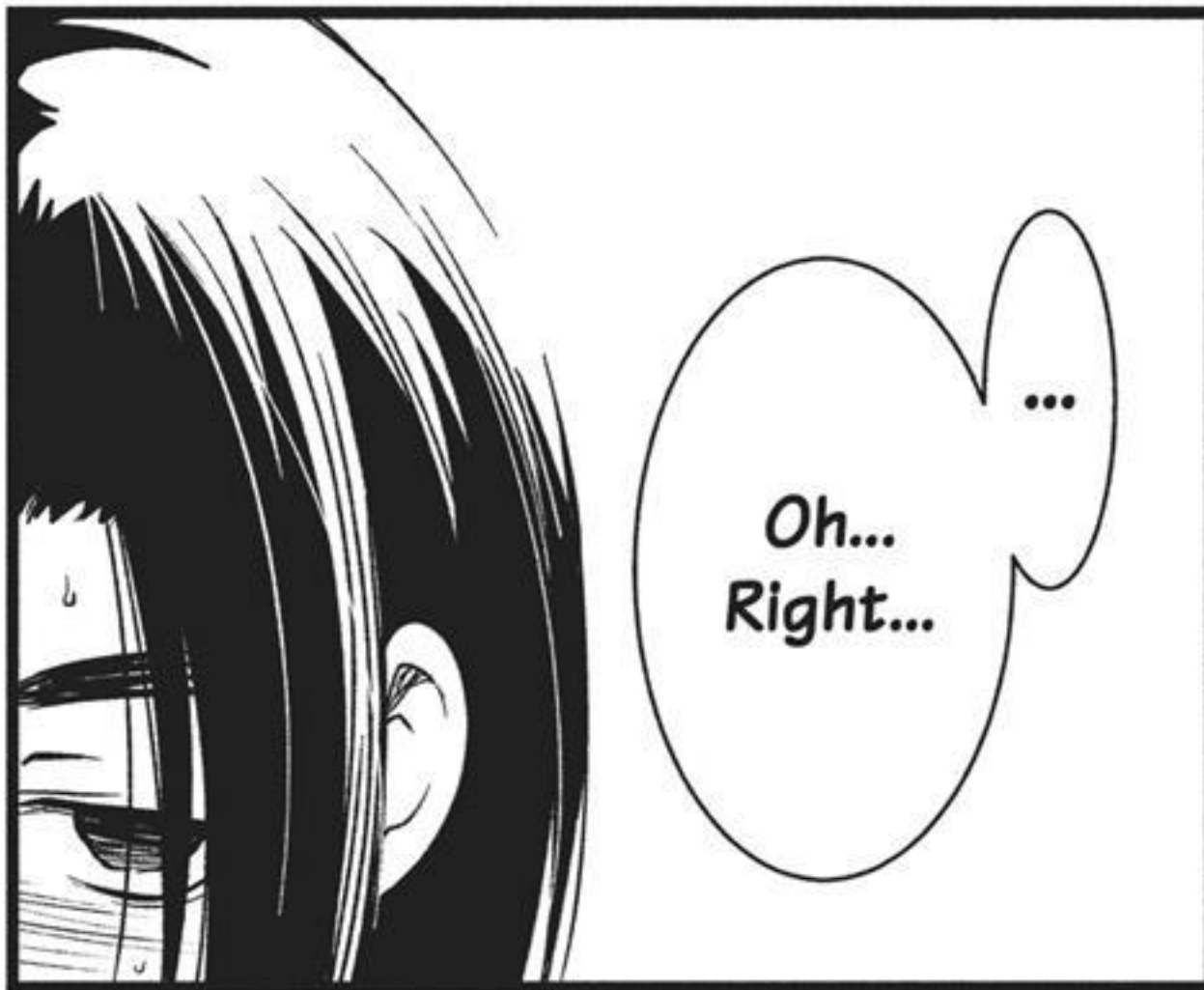
















I might  
as well do  
the laundry  
for her,  
I guess...



And  
while  
I'm  
at  
it...



...Oh  
well...

If I  
have to  
wait until  
this first load  
is finished,  
I might as well  
use that time  
and...



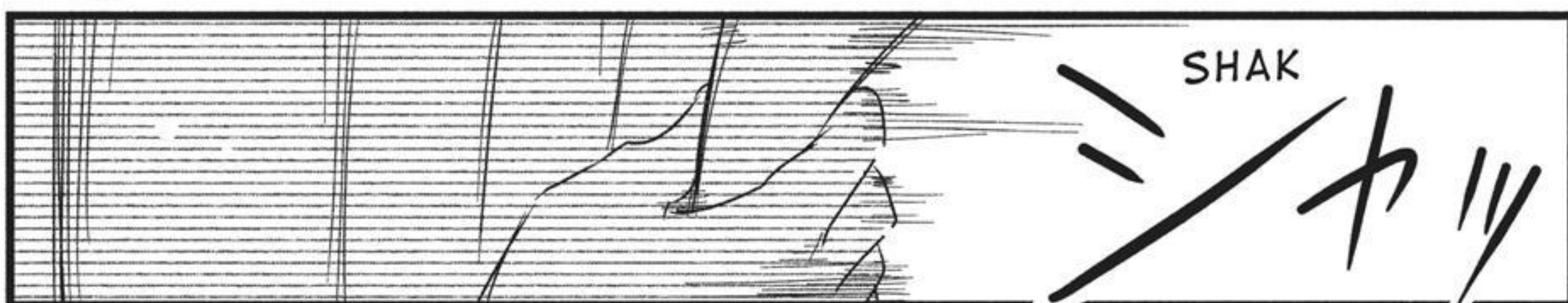
...



But

I  
wasn't  
able to  
fit it all  
in one  
load...







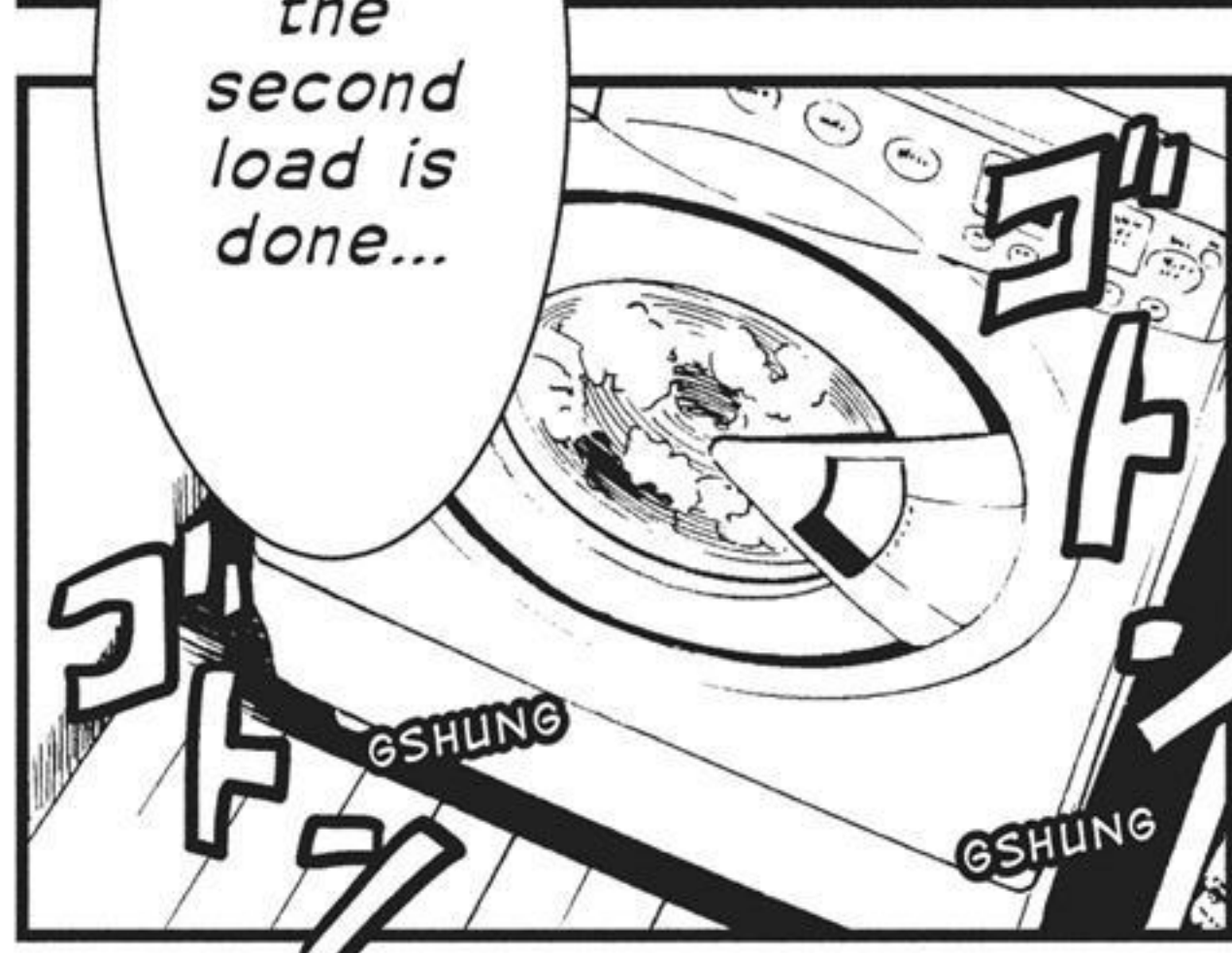


I MIGHT  
AS WELL  
CLEAN UP  
THE LIVING  
ROOM, I  
GUESS...







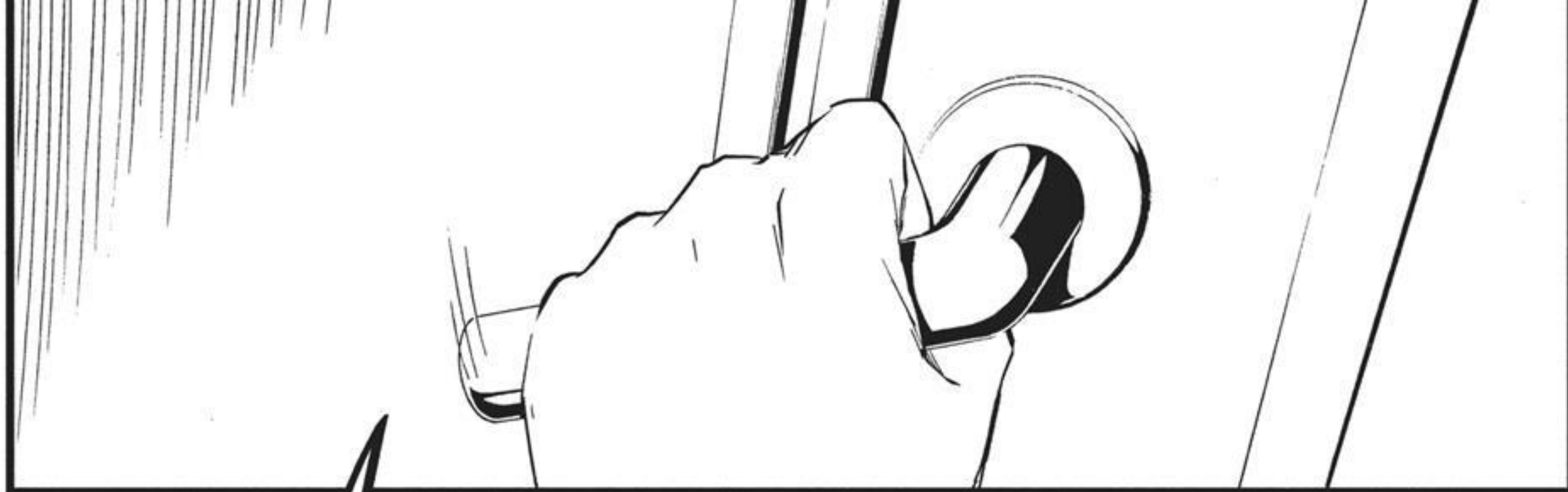




*The  
second  
floor...*



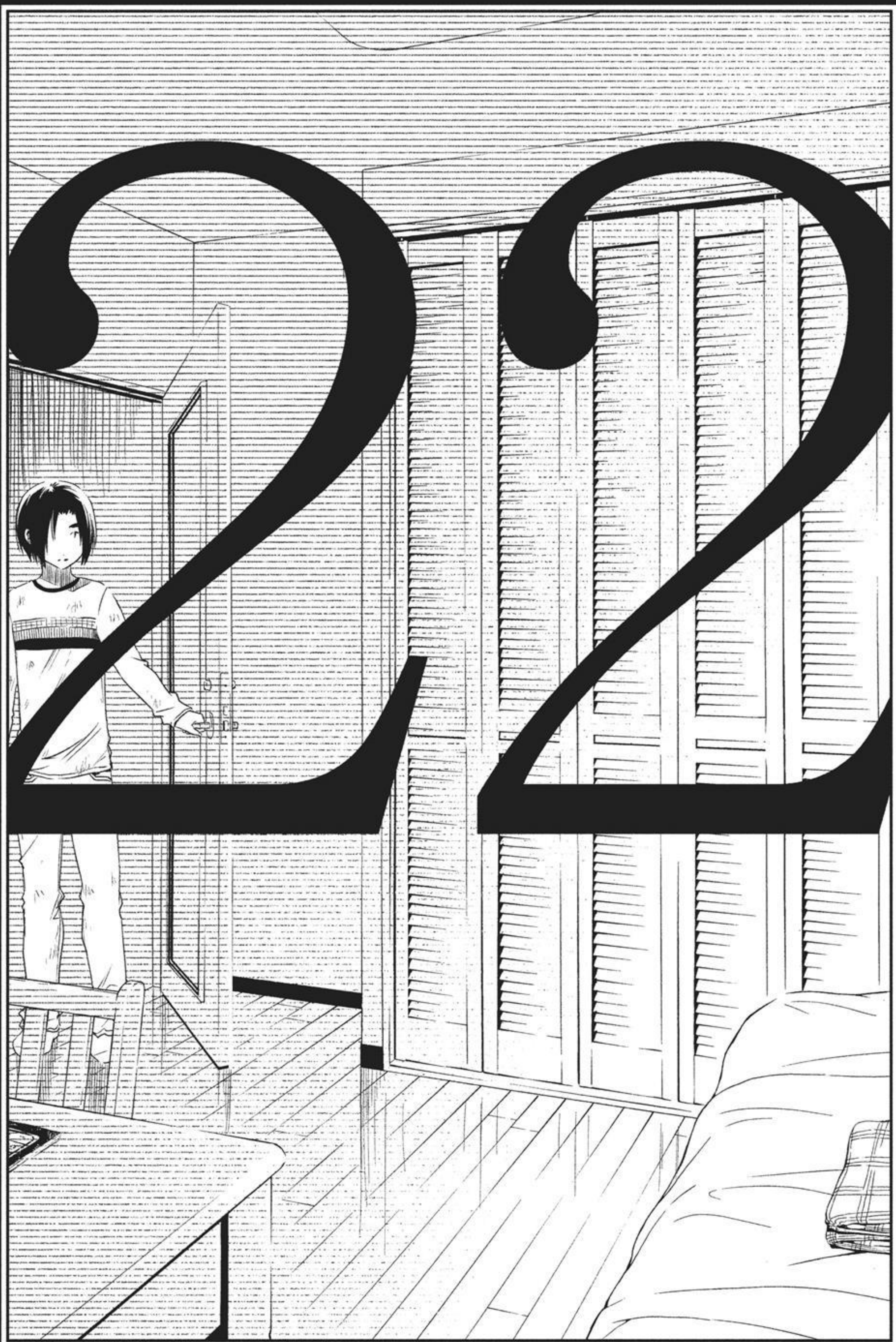




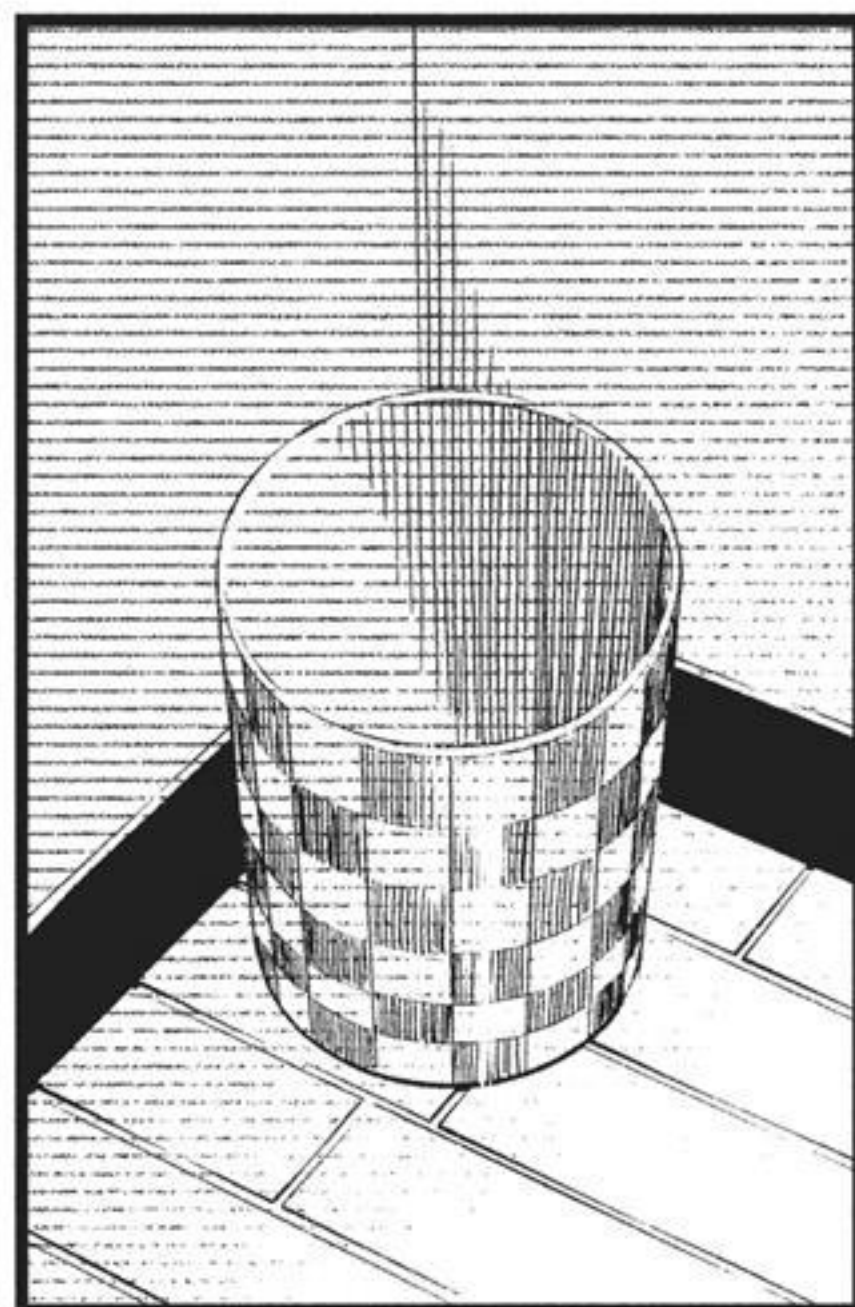
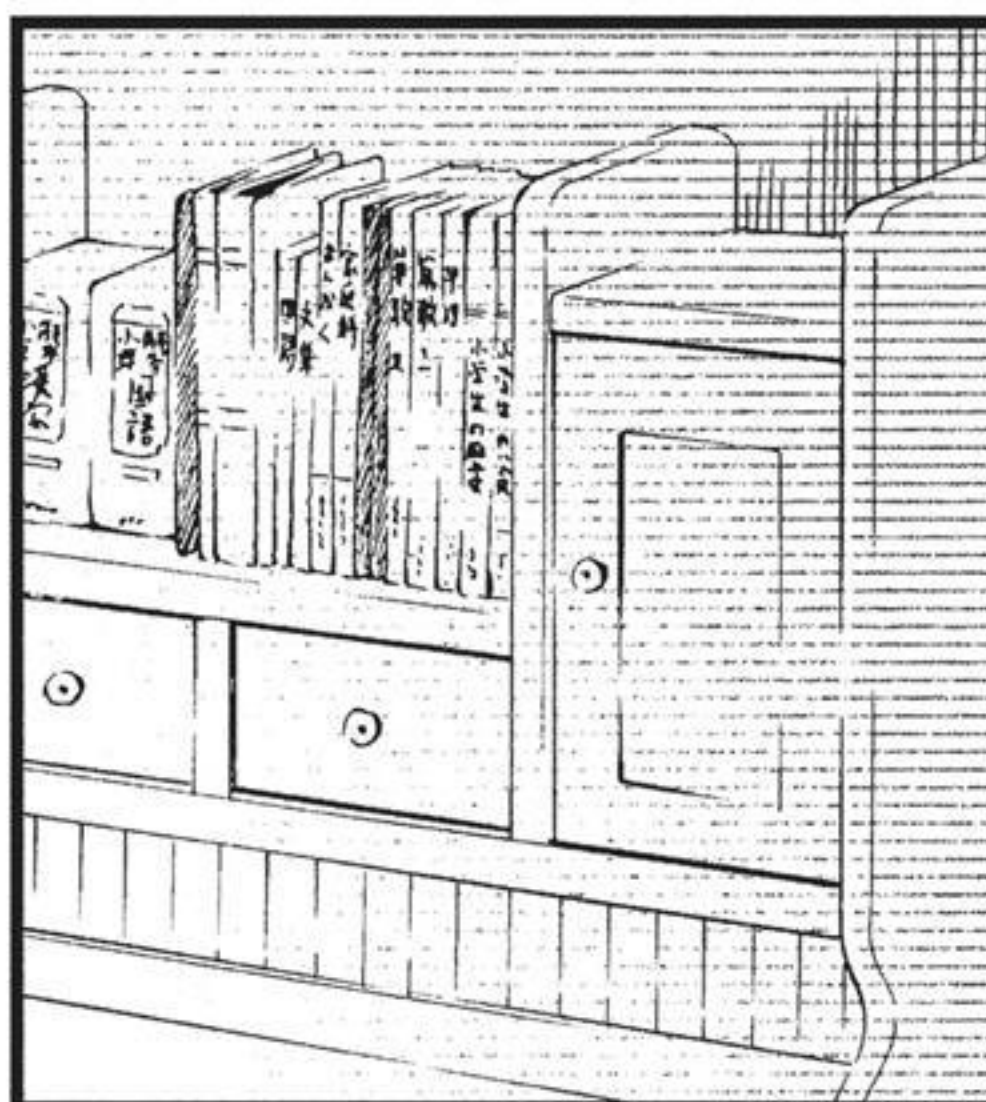




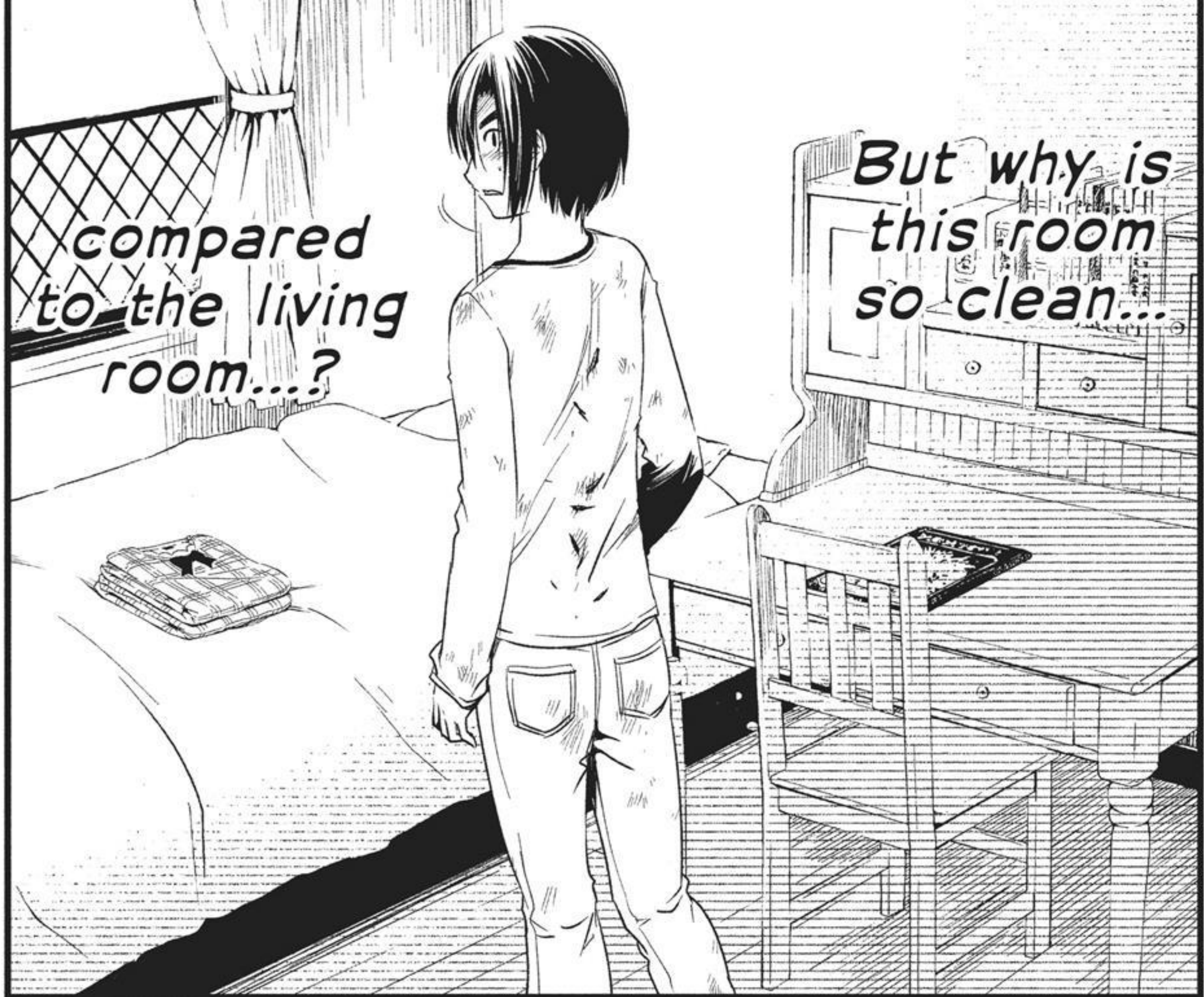
















This must be her diary from years ago...



Oh. Maybe I can figure something out about her parents if I look through...



**DUN** *Good morning.*  
*"Thank you for*  
*is say* **DUN**







This isn't

any sort of diary at all....!!



- Always say "Good morning."
- Always say "Thank you for this meal."
- Always say "Thank you for the food."
- Always say "I'll be going now."
- Always say "Have a nice day."
- Always say "Welcome home."
- Always say "Nice to meet you."
- Always say "Thank you."
- Always say "Excuse me."
- Always say "Hello."
- Always say "Goodbye."



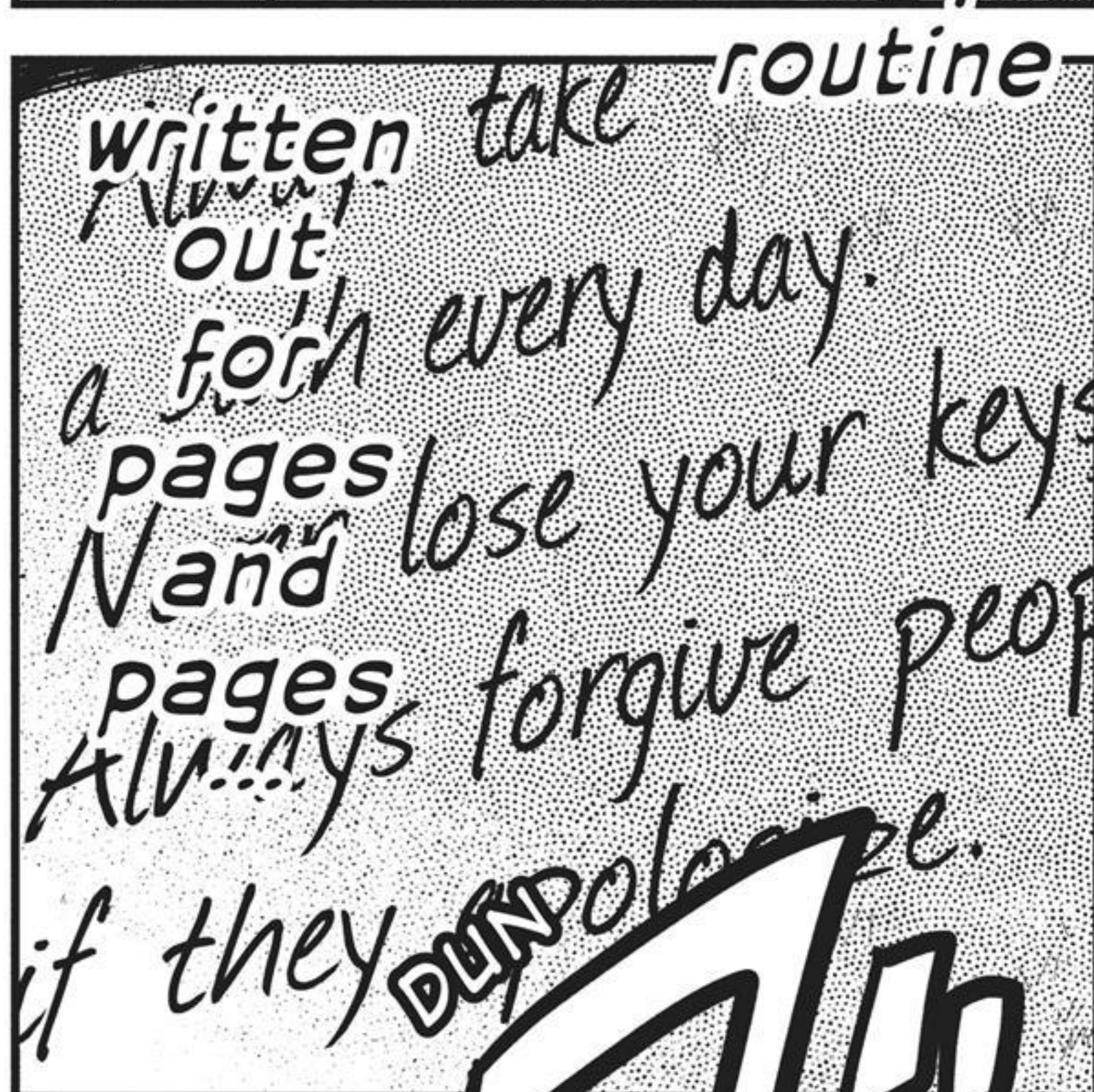
No  
....!!



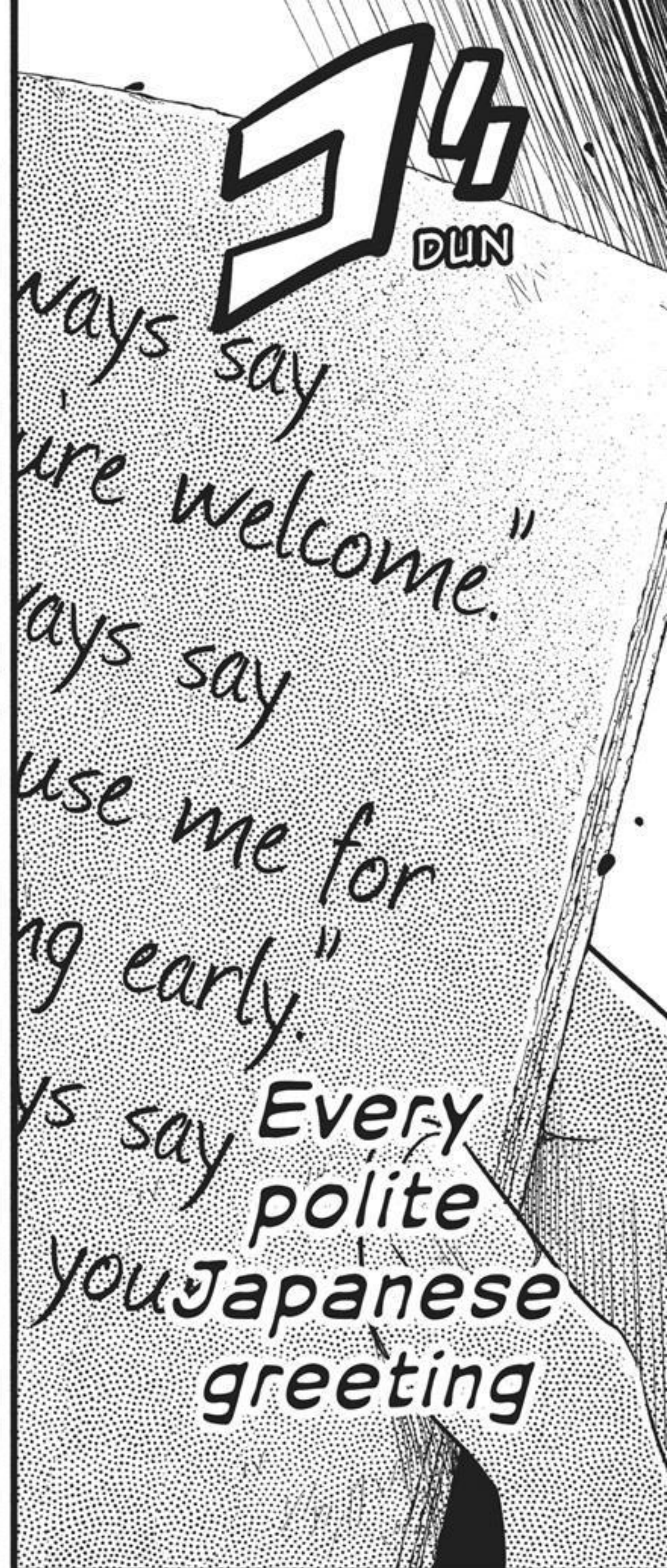




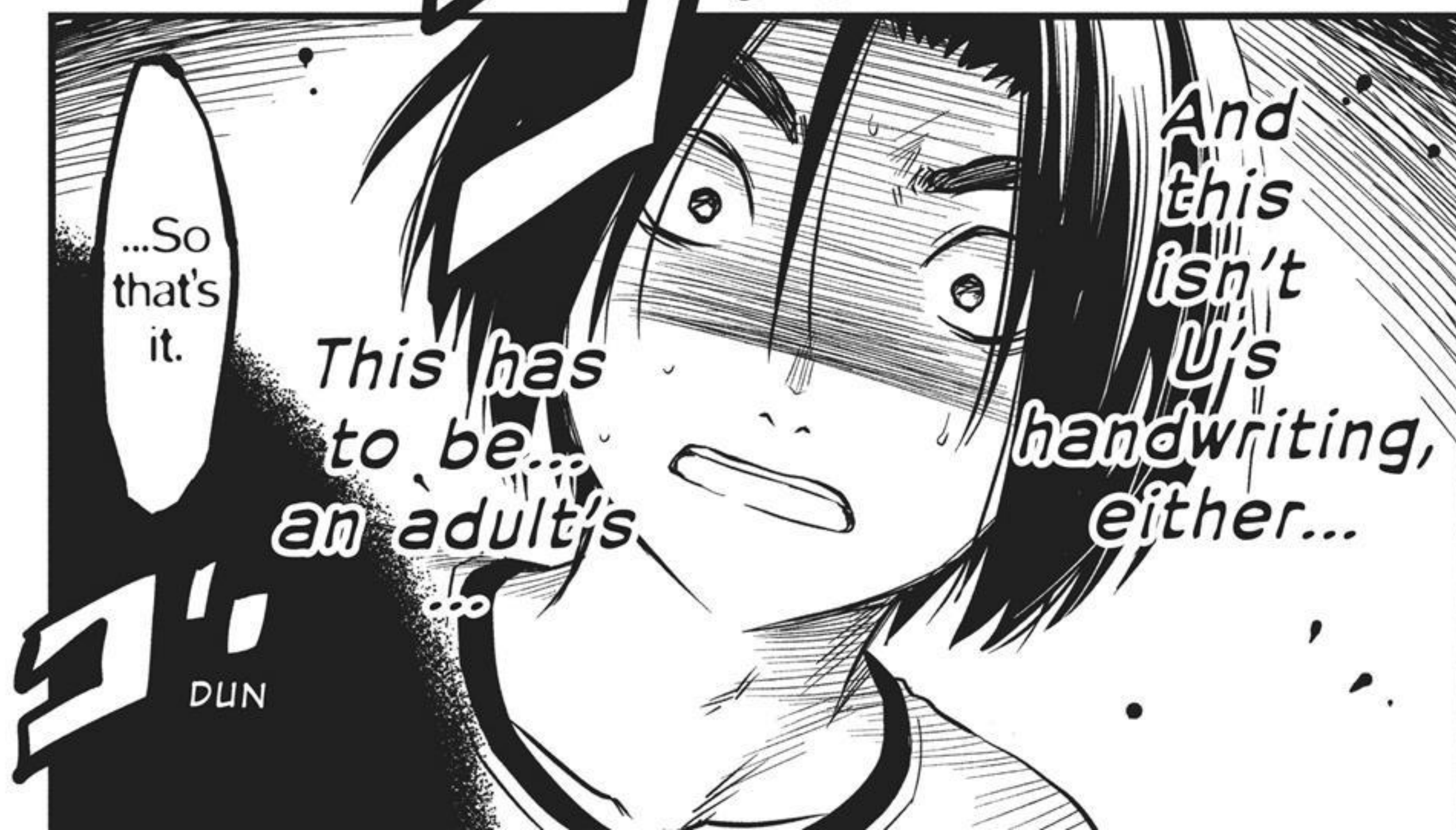
and  
every  
step  
of a  
daily



written take routine  
out  
a form every day.  
pages  
Nand lose your keys  
pages  
Always forgive people  
if they apologize.



ways say  
are welcome."  
ays say  
use me for  
ng early."  
ys say Every  
polite  
you Japanese  
greeting



...So  
that's  
it.

This has  
to be...  
an adult's

And  
this  
isn't  
U's  
handwriting,  
either...





DUN

DUN

This  
...

This is  
where  
the rules  
come  
from.

DUN

DUN

The rules  
controlling  
U...

DUN

NOTEBOOK

ん

なまえ





Whenever  
she has  
the time,  
U reads this  
notebook

to  
figure  
out  
what  
she needs  
to be  
doing...

this is  
like U's  
operating  
manual  
!!!

In  
other  
words,

ways get  
at the  
time  
days off

Always say "Excuse  
me for leaving early."  
Always say "Take  
your time."  
Always say "It was  
delicious."

DUN









Never take money or candy from people



Now

Always say "Nice to meet you."



Always go to school





Always come home by evening  
when you're out playing  
Never leave your games running  
when you aren't playing them  
Never borrow or lend games  
with your friends.  
Always be a good girl, even  
when you're at a friend's  
house.  
Always value your friends.  
Study for at least as

here  
it is  
...

And  
...

ハ  
HALT た..

Always come home by eve  
when you're out playing  
Never leave your games run  
when you aren't playing them  
Never borrow or lend games  
with your friends.  
Always be a good girl, even  
when you're at a friend's  
house.  
Always value your friends.  
Study for at least as

on  
that  
day.

are  
what  
was  
controlling  
her

These  
words







That  
couldn't  
have  
been the  
intention  
of whoever  
made this  
notebook

She was  
going in  
order of  
priority.







and  
sticking  
to  
them

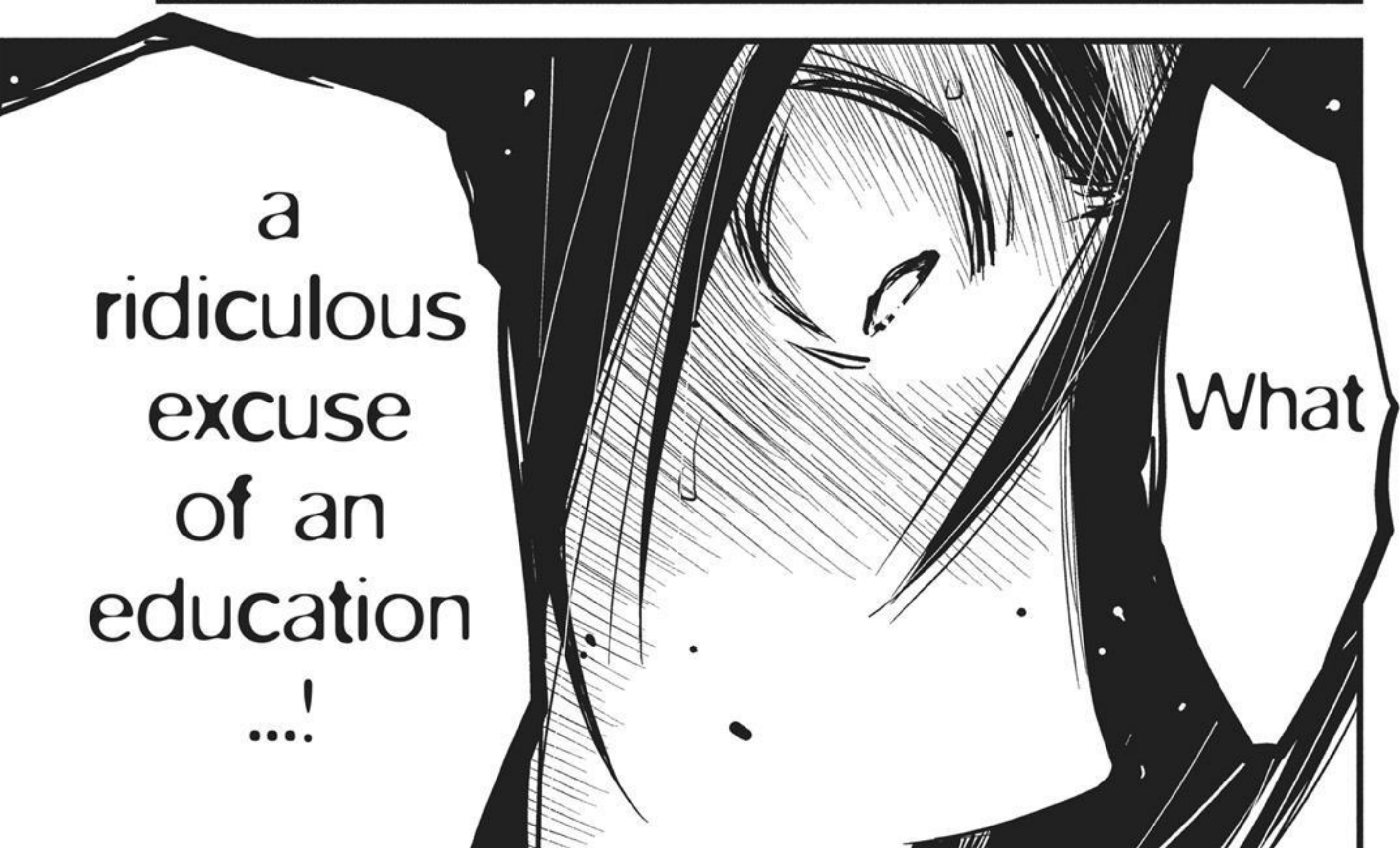
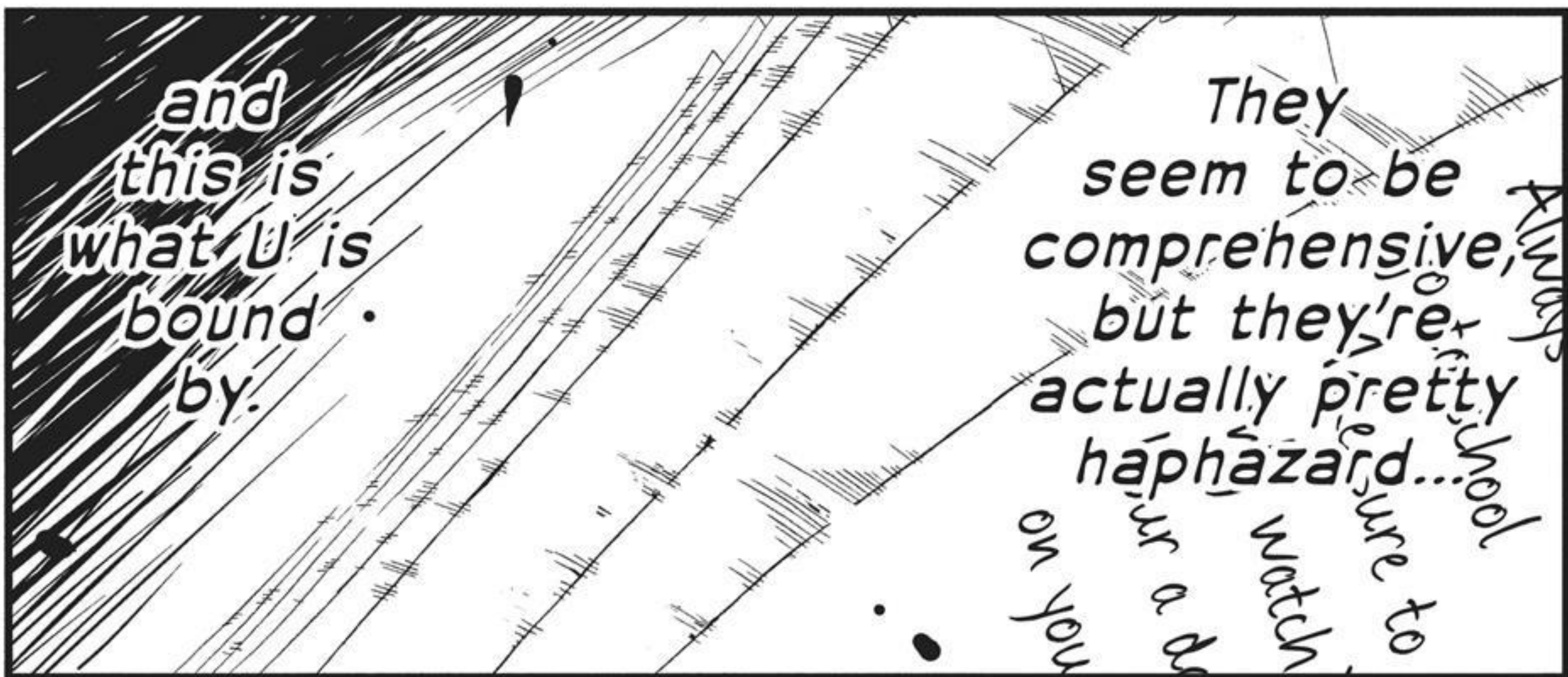
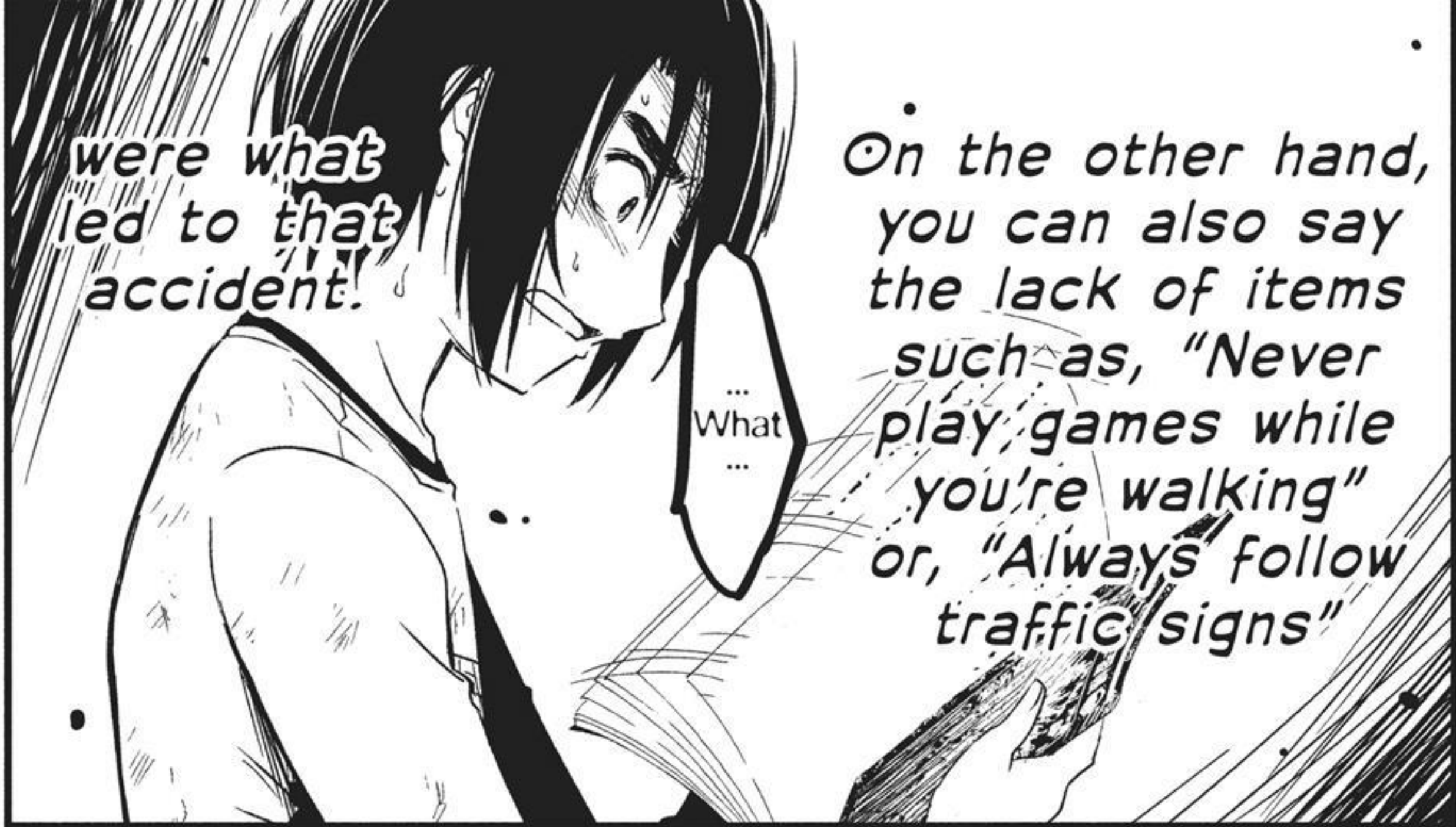
in  
order,  
from  
first  
to  
last  
...!!



U was  
taking  
these  
"rules"

...









days accept your punishment when you do some



ways be a good girl, even when Daddy and Mommy are



Always do what your parents  
Always respect your parents  
FWP: Listen when your parents



*Never let anyone know who you really are.*



...  
They  
had  
real-  
ized.





But

At  
some  
point,  
U's  
parents

realized  
they were  
raising  
their  
child the  
wrong  
way.

they  
never  
admitted  
to their  
mistake.

THP





*"You*

*saw  
me.*

*So I  
have  
to do  
this.*

*I have  
to lock  
you  
away  
and  
take  
you in.*

*Because  
you might  
tell them.*



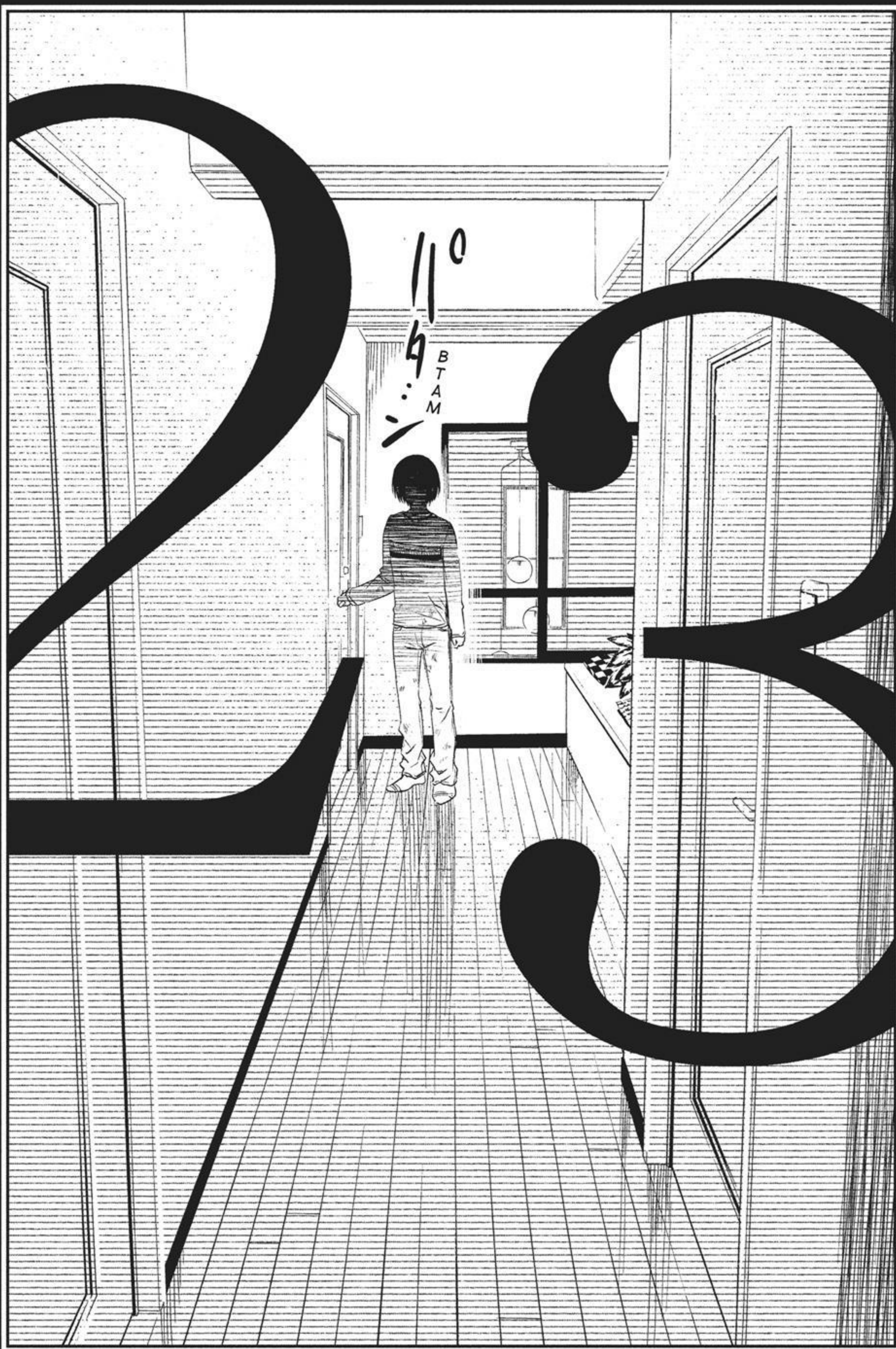
*About  
who I  
really  
am."*



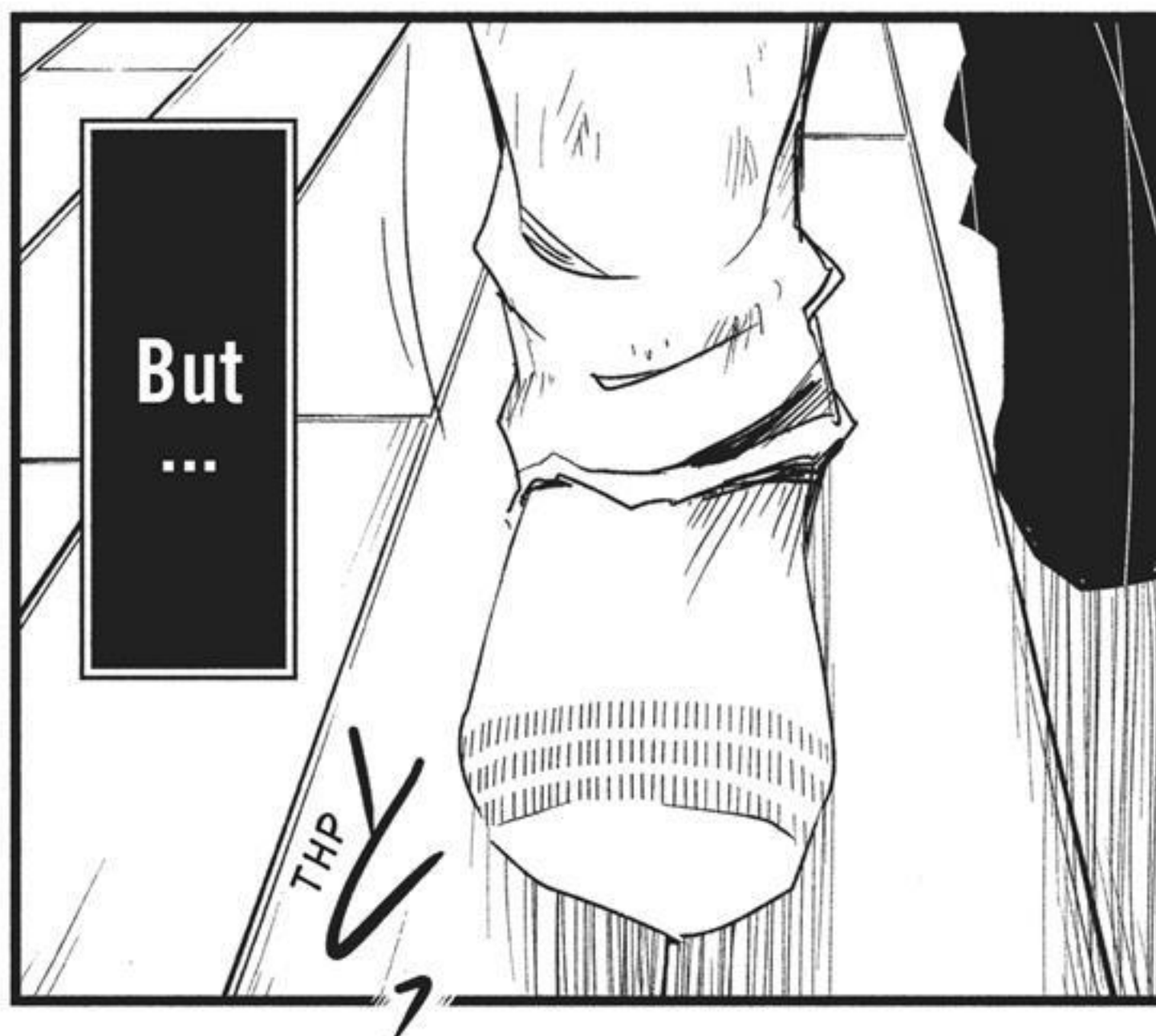


**"Who  
I...  
really  
am..."**













In  
for a  
penny,  
in  
for a  
pound  
?

Was  
it  
duty  
?

Re-  
sponsi-  
bility?



without  
searching  
through  
the  
remaining  
rooms.

I  
couldn't  
bring  
myself  
to leave  
U's  
home



No.

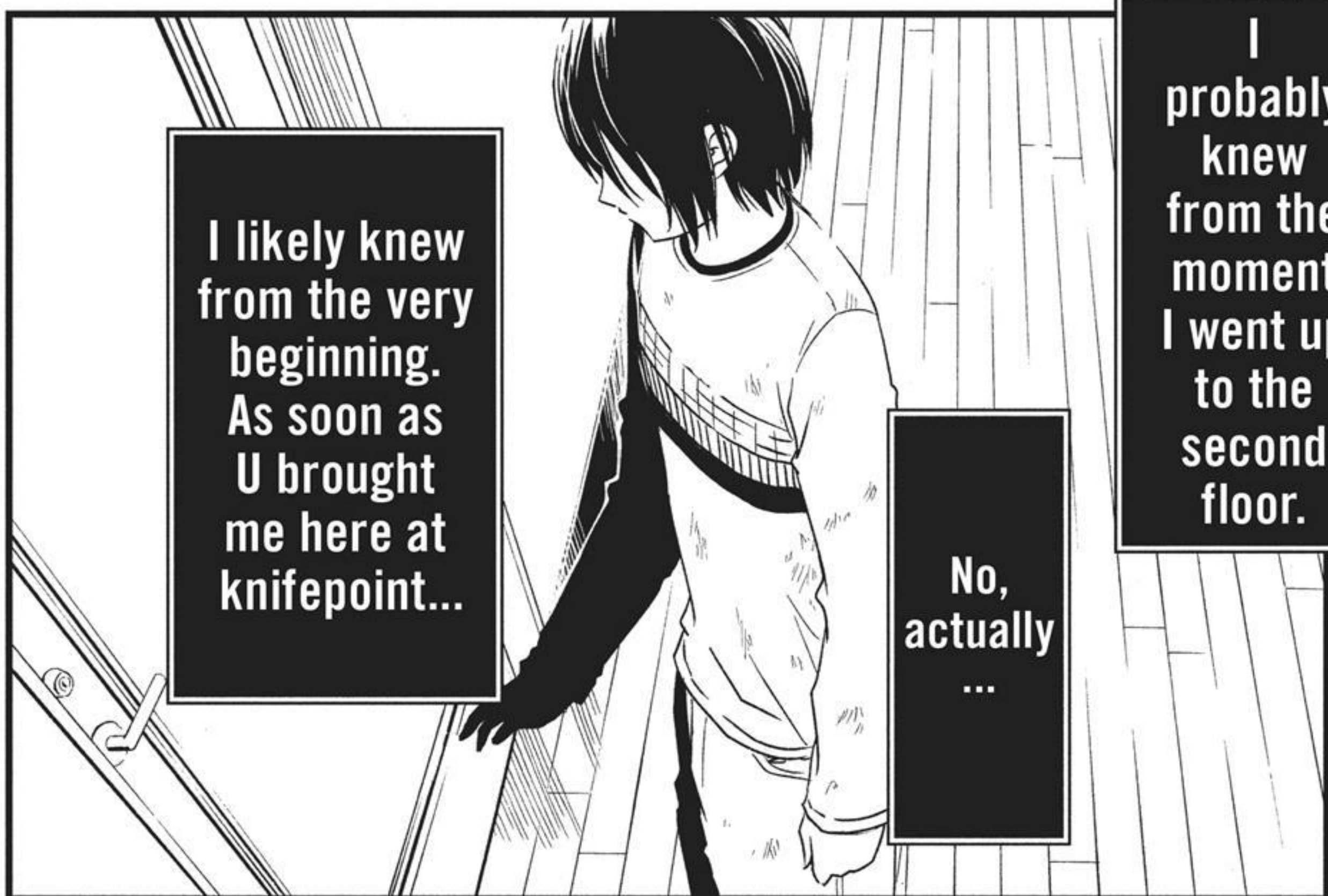




I must have known on an intuitive level.



I think I knew it, but I had shied away from confronting it head-on.

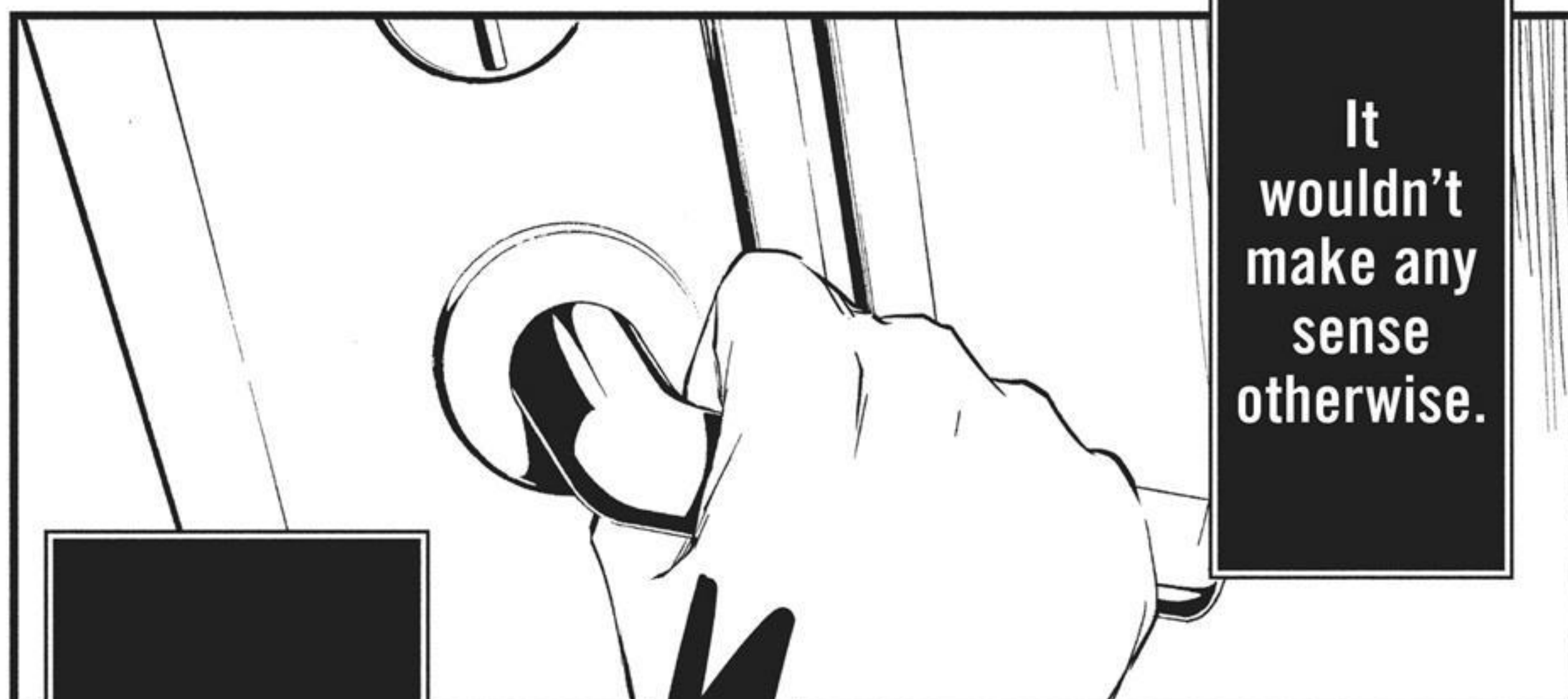


I likely knew from the very beginning. As soon as U brought me here at knifepoint...

No, actually ...

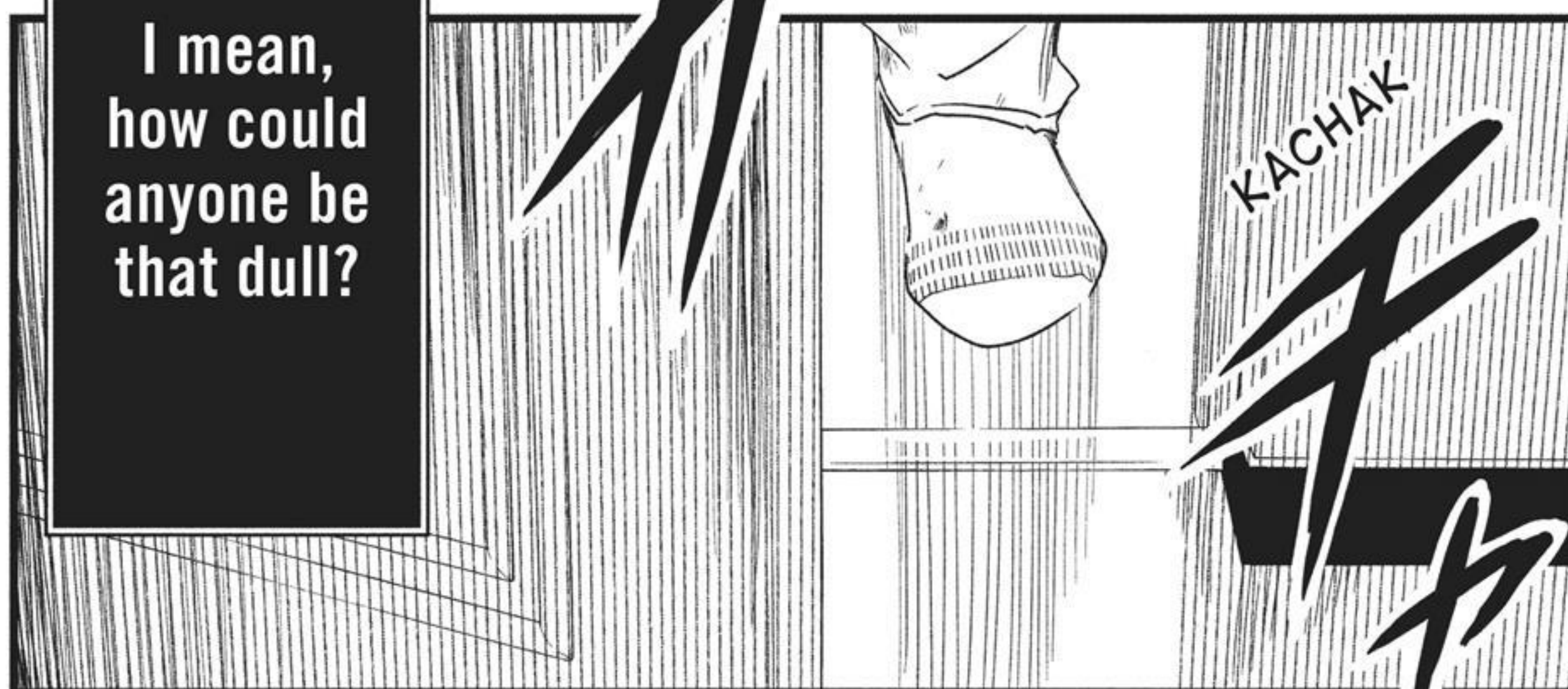
I probably knew from the moment I went up to the second floor.





It  
wouldn't  
make any  
sense  
otherwise.

I mean,  
how could  
anyone be  
that dull?

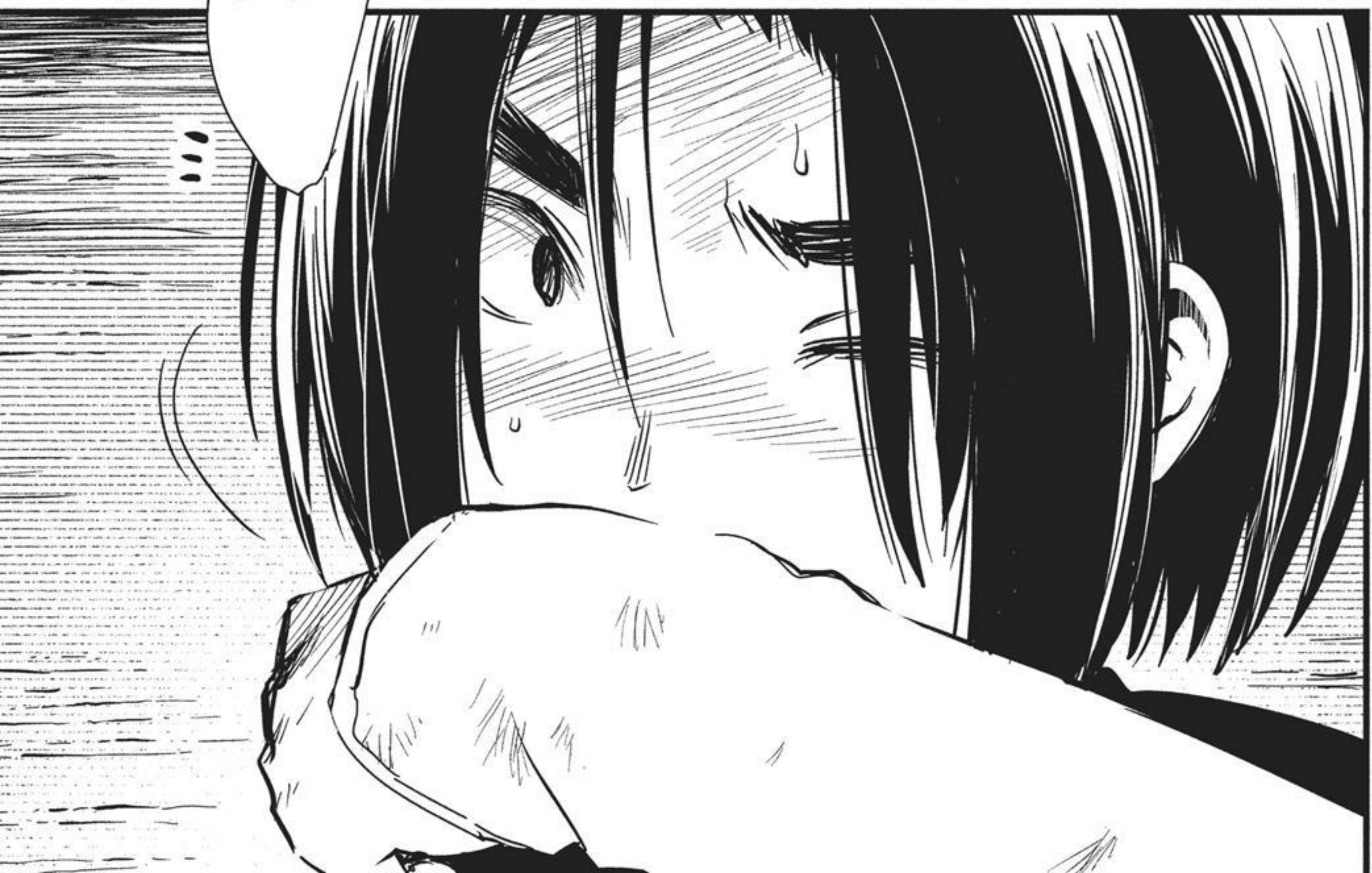




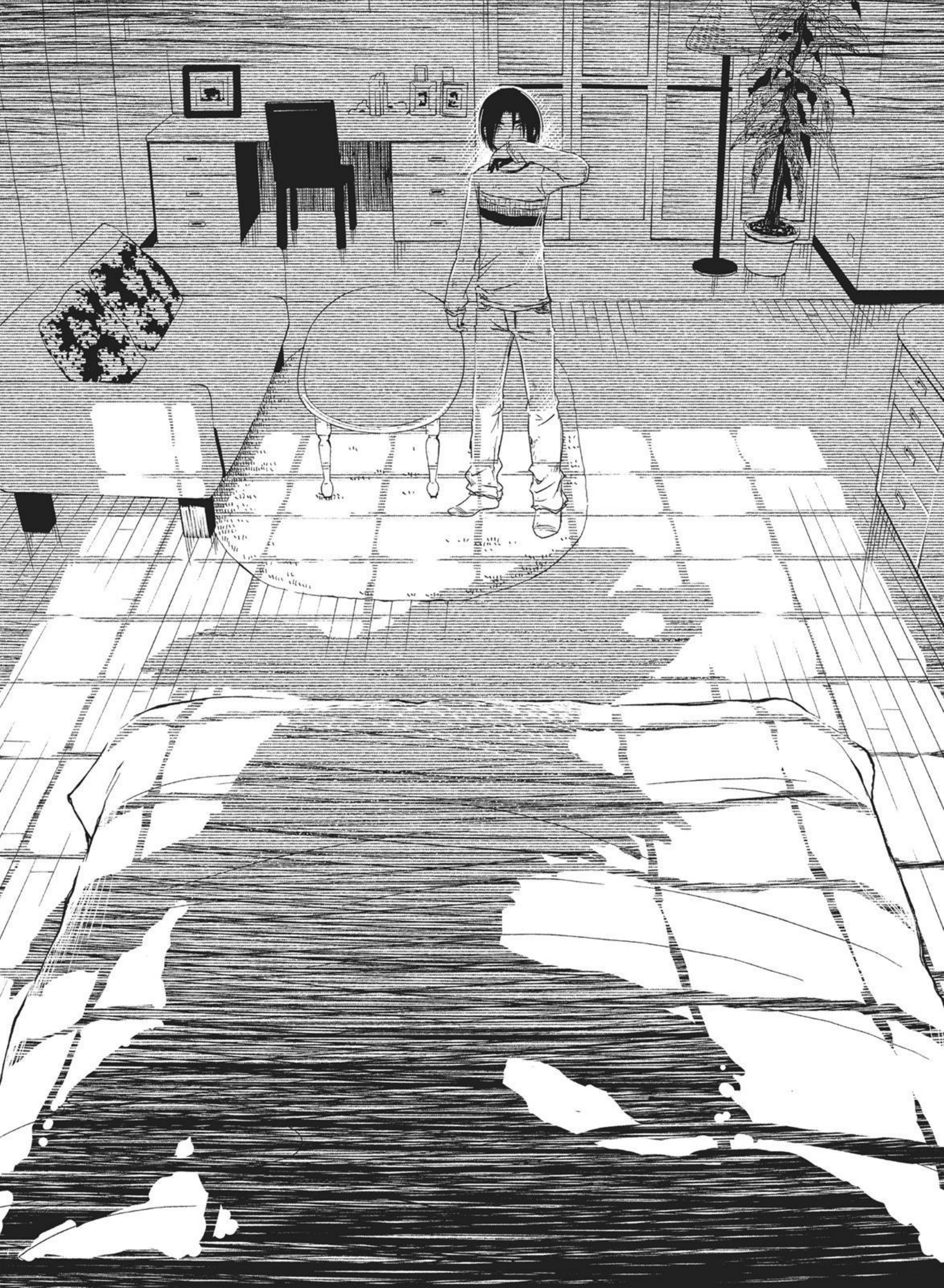


BWOOOOSH





















...Oh.  
So  
that's  
what  
she  
meant.

They  
killed  
each  
other  
and  
left her  
behind...

*"Mommy  
and  
Daddy  
went  
away."*








*That  
was  
nothing  
more  
than the  
smell of  
corpses.*



*"Every home-  
has its  
own smell  
to it"?  
What was  
I going  
on about  
...?"*



What  
the hell  
are you  
doing  
dead  
?



*There are  
plenty of  
parents the  
world would  
be better off  
without...*

*What's  
going to  
become of  
that girl's  
future?*

*if the  
two of  
you go  
and  
die like  
that...?*

*• But  
what's  
going to  
happen  
to U*





*So  
far that  
it may be  
impossible  
to fix...*

*Her  
life has  
deviated  
far from  
any kind  
of proper  
path.*

*for every  
part of that.  
The two  
of you,  
dead...*

Ha  
ha  
...!

Hah  
...

... And  
you're  
respon-  
sible



You  
must  
have  
found  
it a  
lot of  
fun,

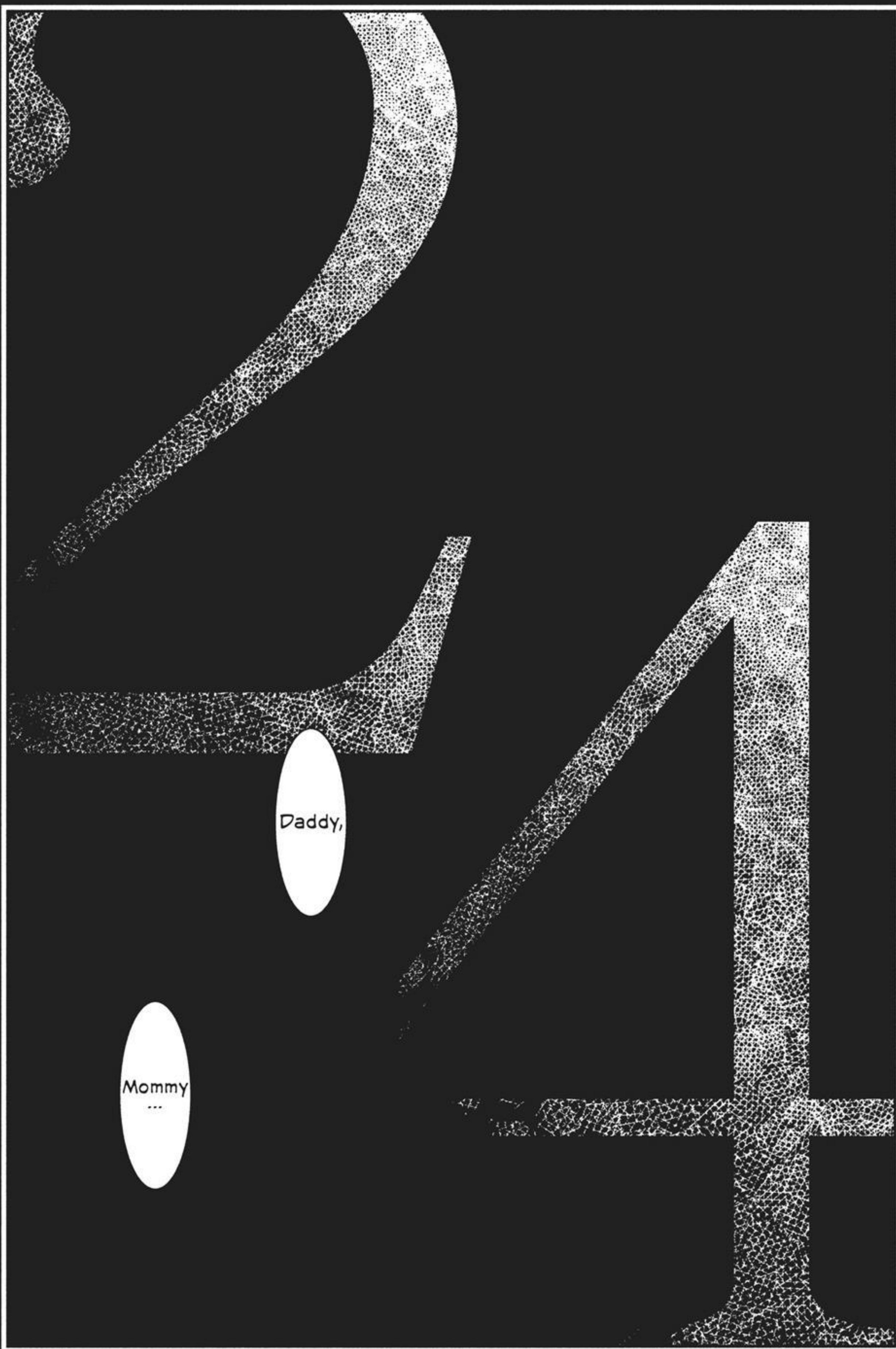
telling  
a child  
to do the  
impossible

...

Ha  
ha  
...

Ha  
ha ha...  
hah...



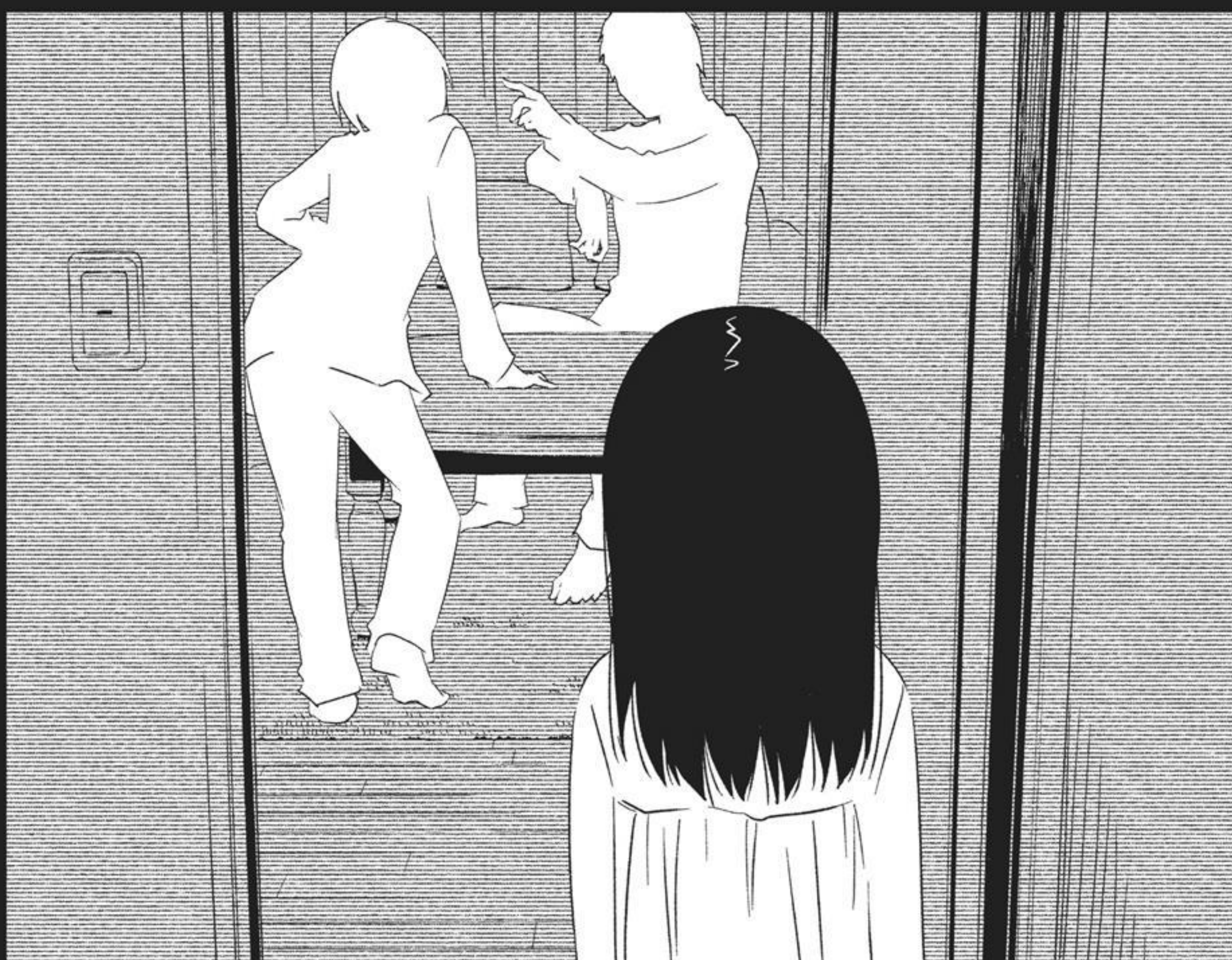


Daddy,

Mommy

...





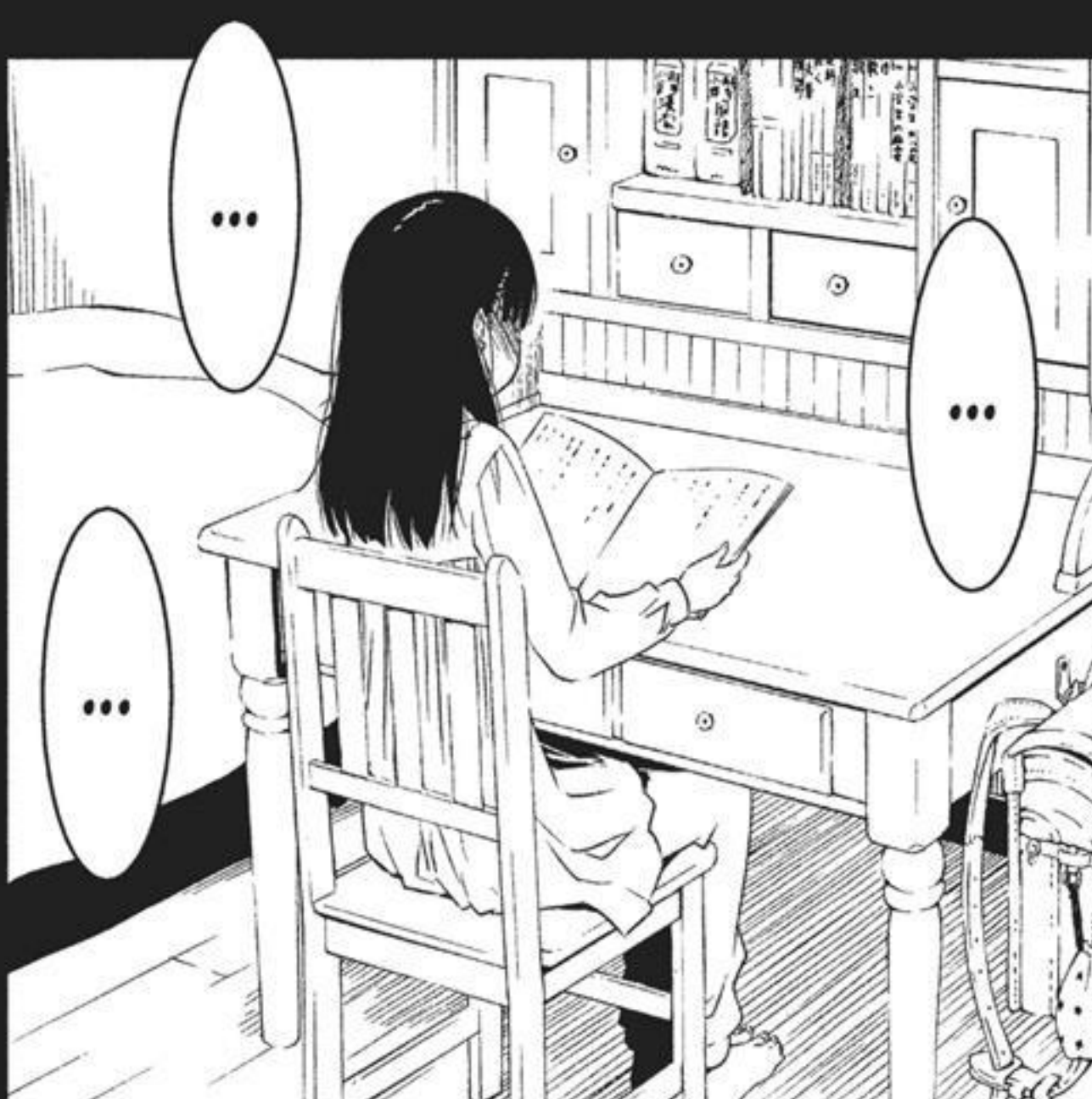
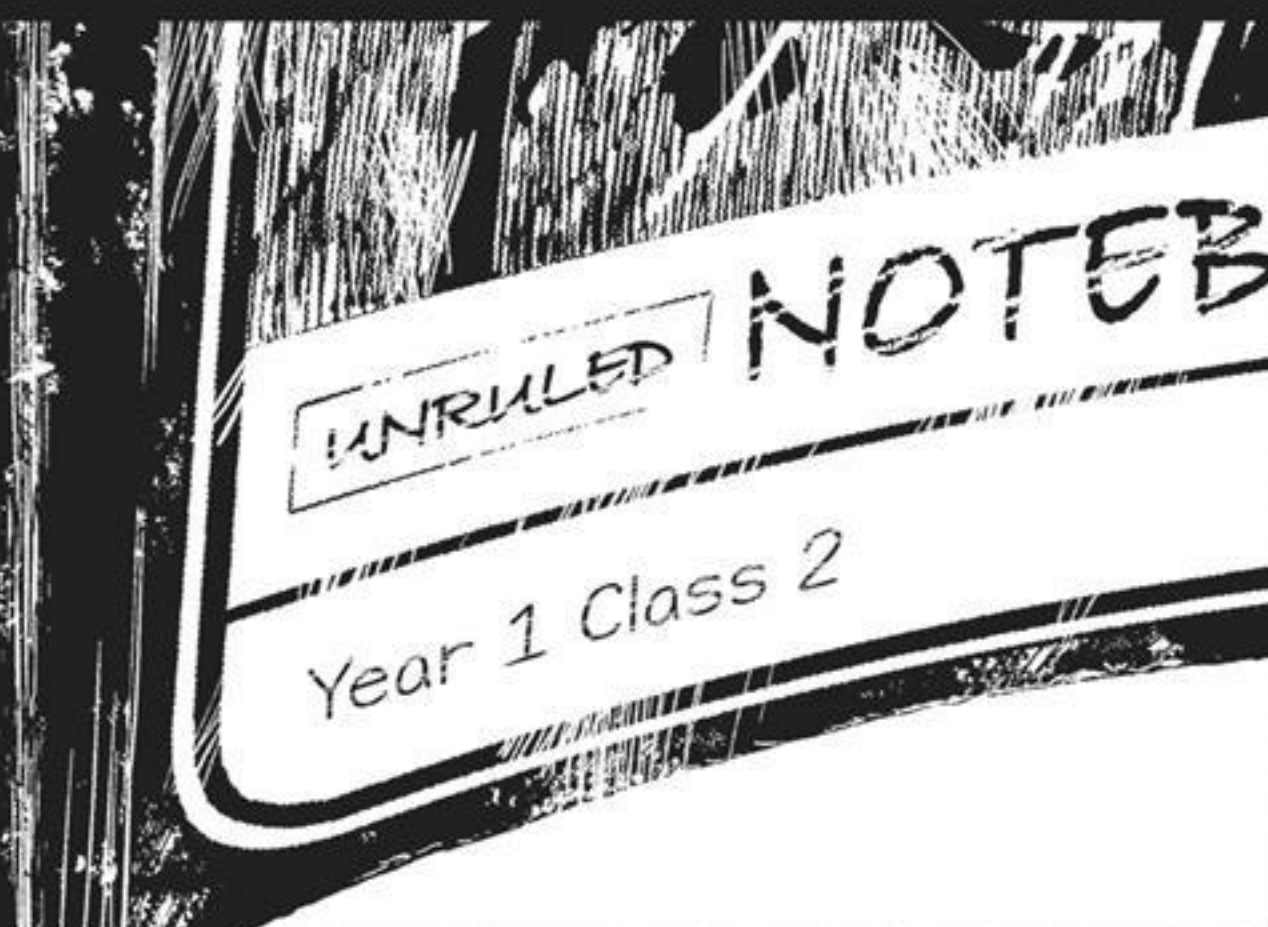
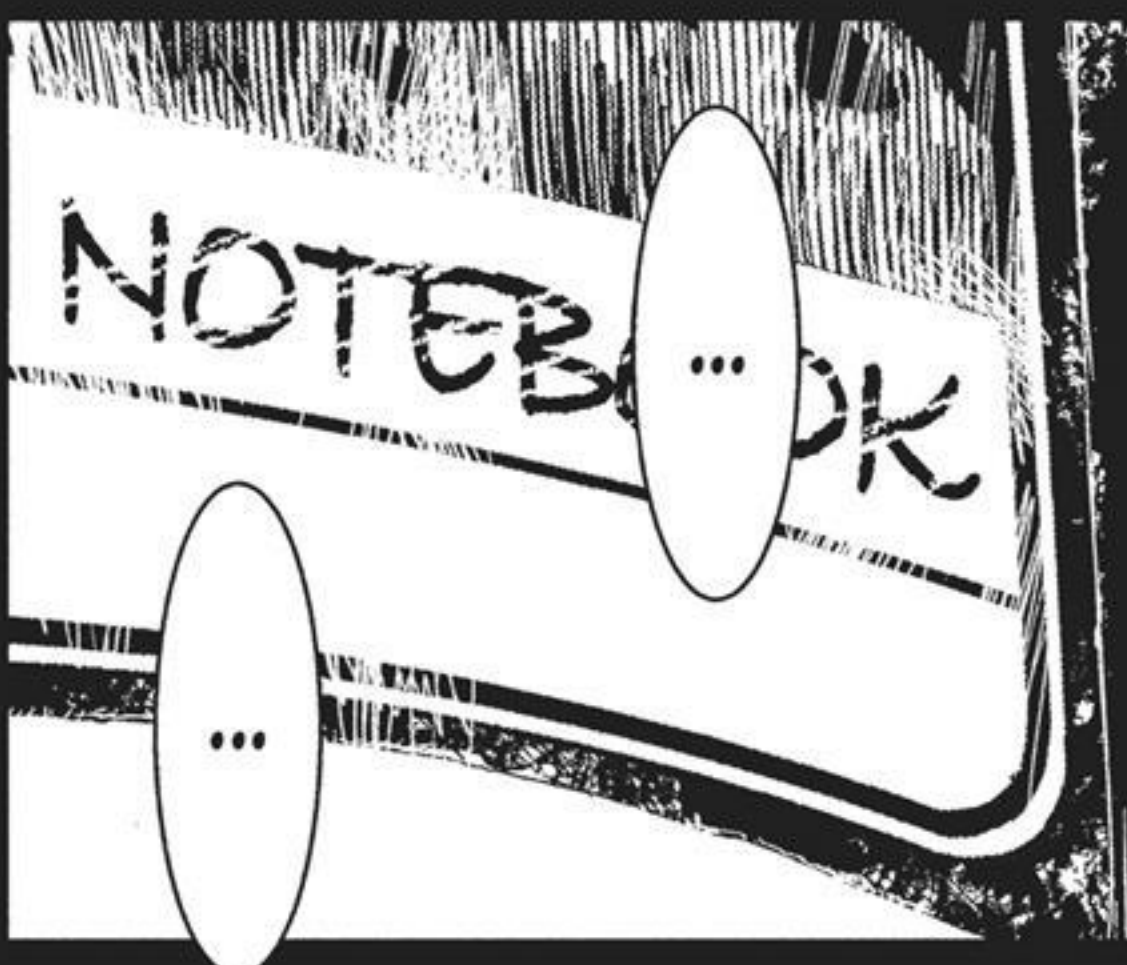




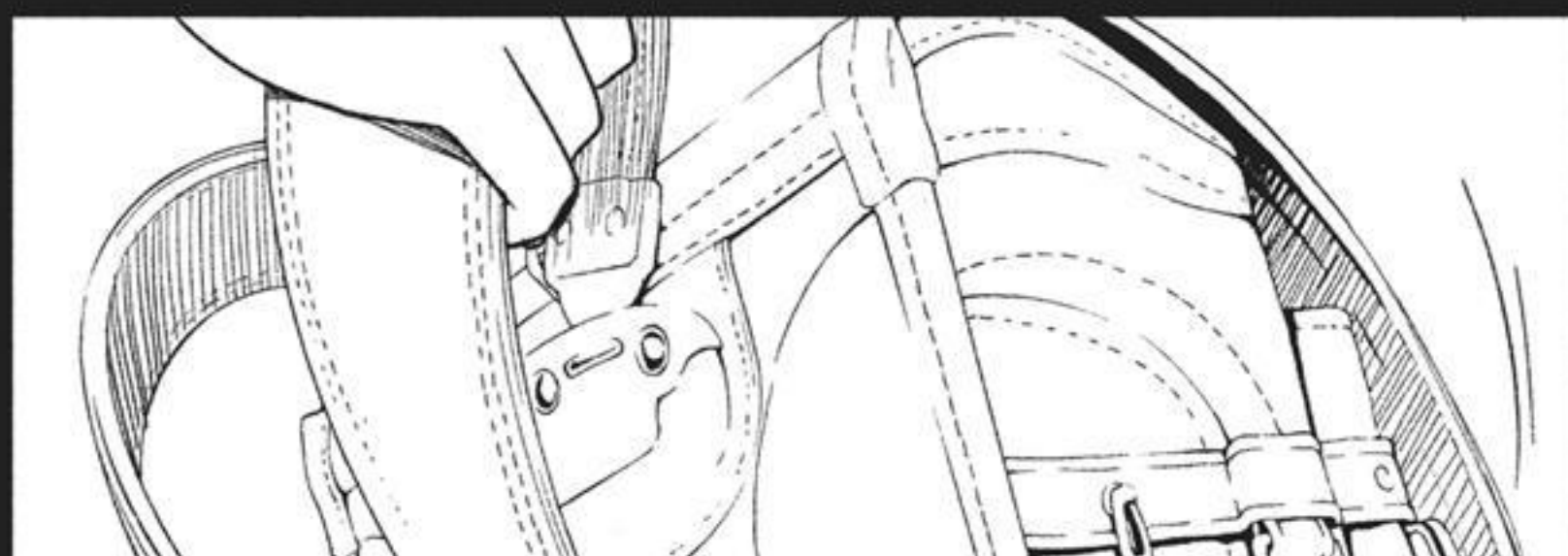




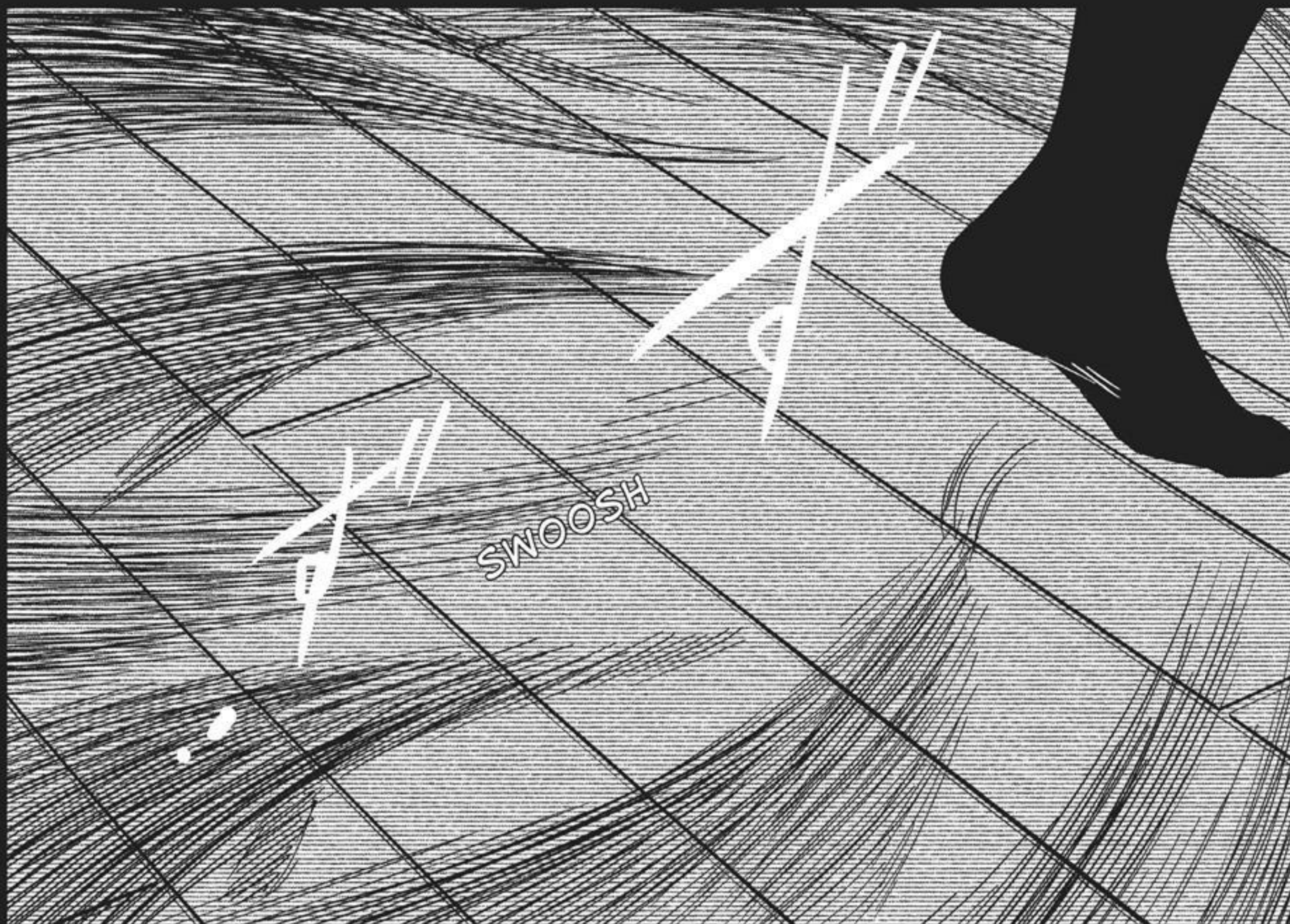








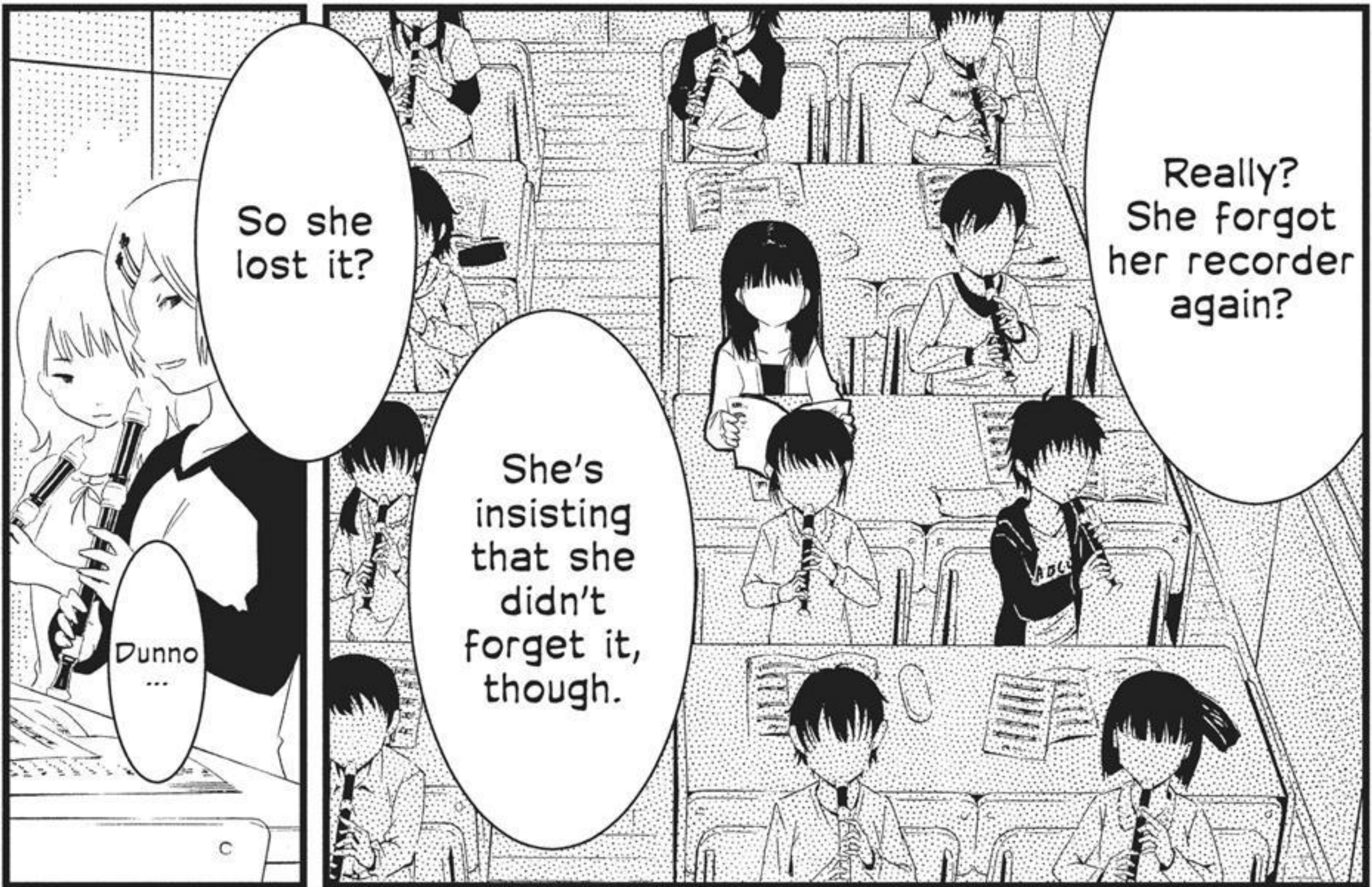




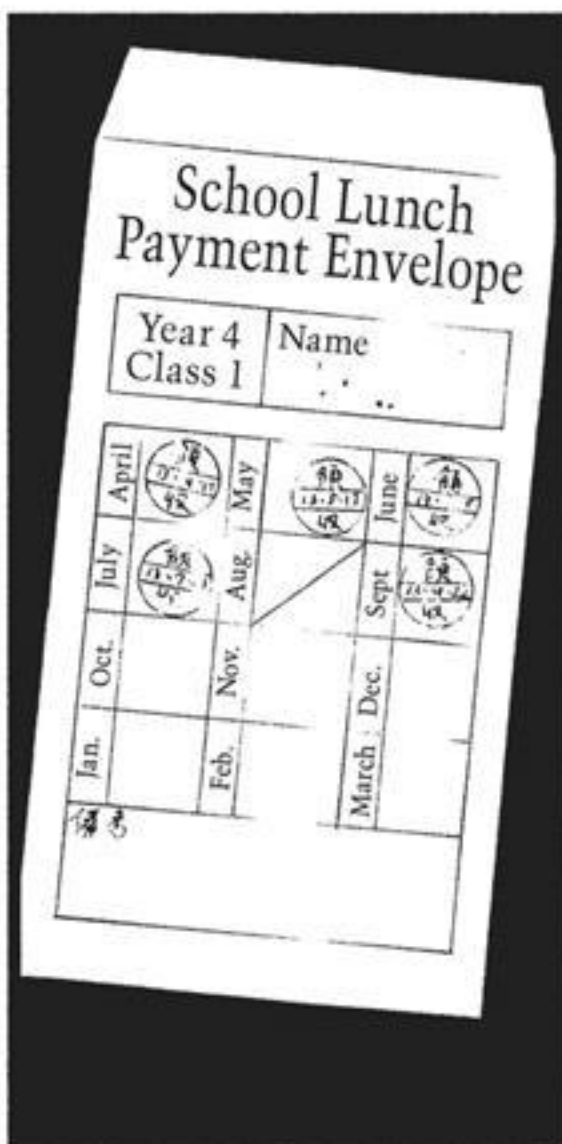




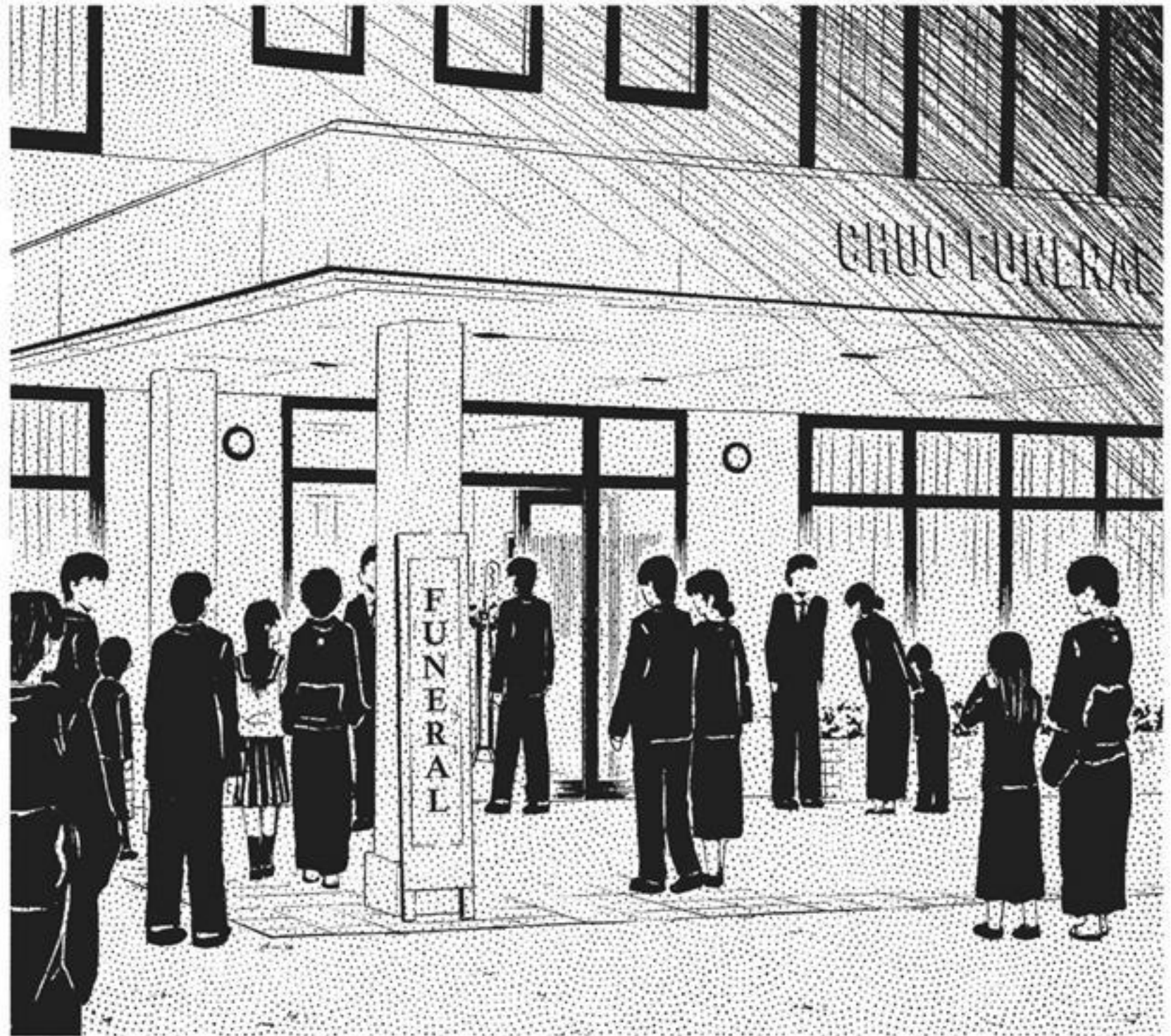




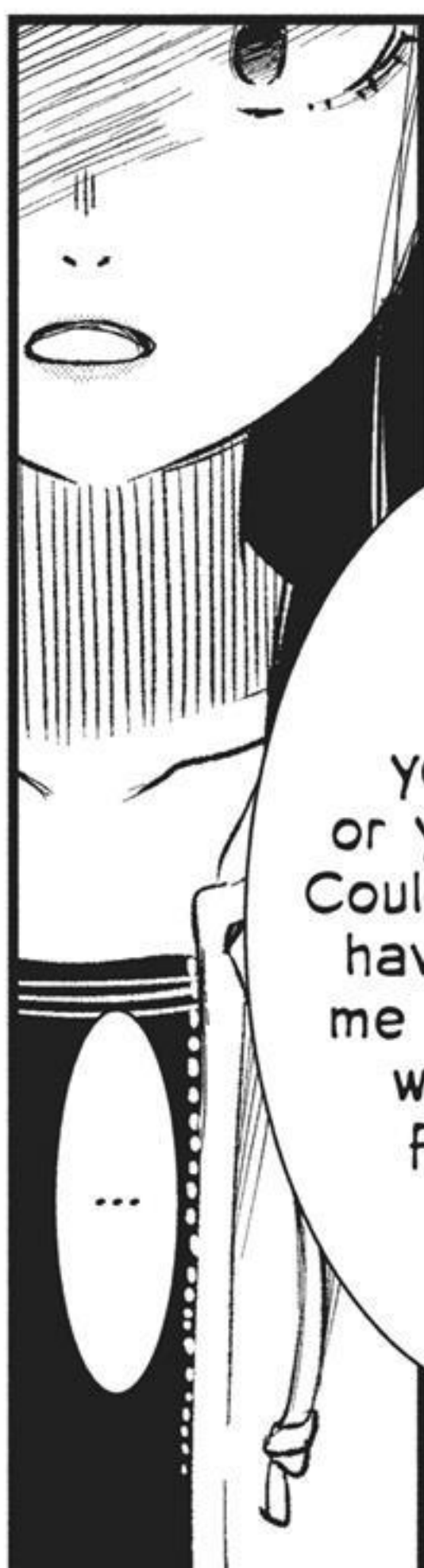












JOLT  
No  
~

Either  
your father  
or your mother.  
Could you please  
have them tell  
me a date that  
would work  
for them?

I was  
wondering  
if it'd be  
possible  
to speak  
to your  
parents  
directly  
sometime  
soon.

You  
know  
...

...

...

...



Always give clear answers to questions.



Never lie.



Never let anyone know who you really are.

Who you really are



















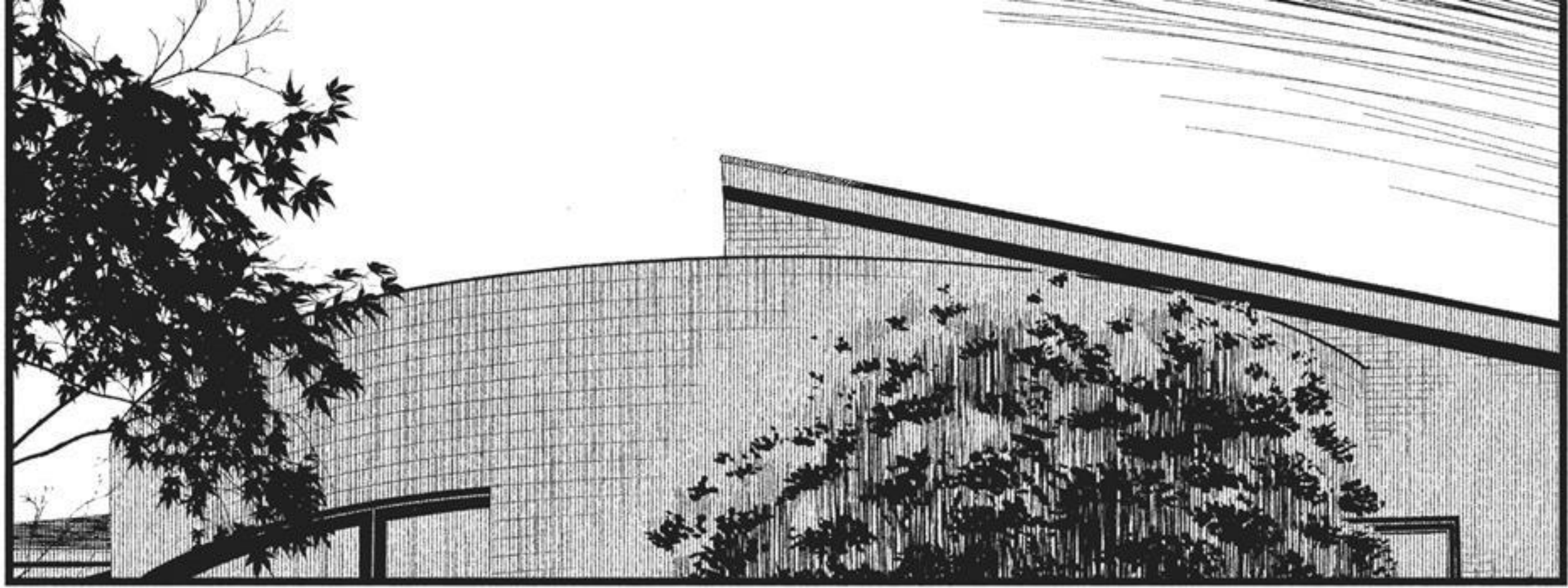
























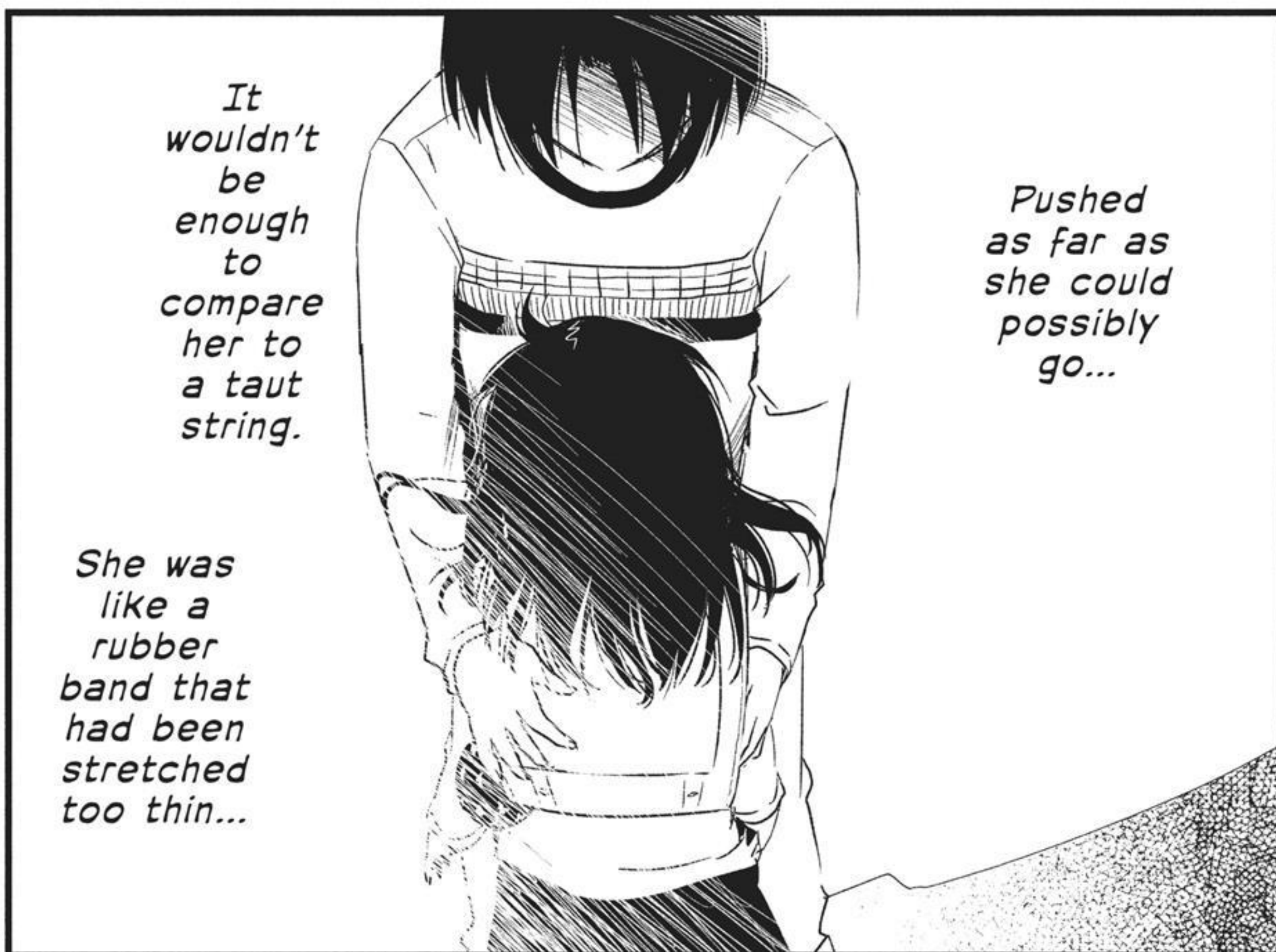




*She  
was  
at her  
limit...*



*...I'm  
tired.*

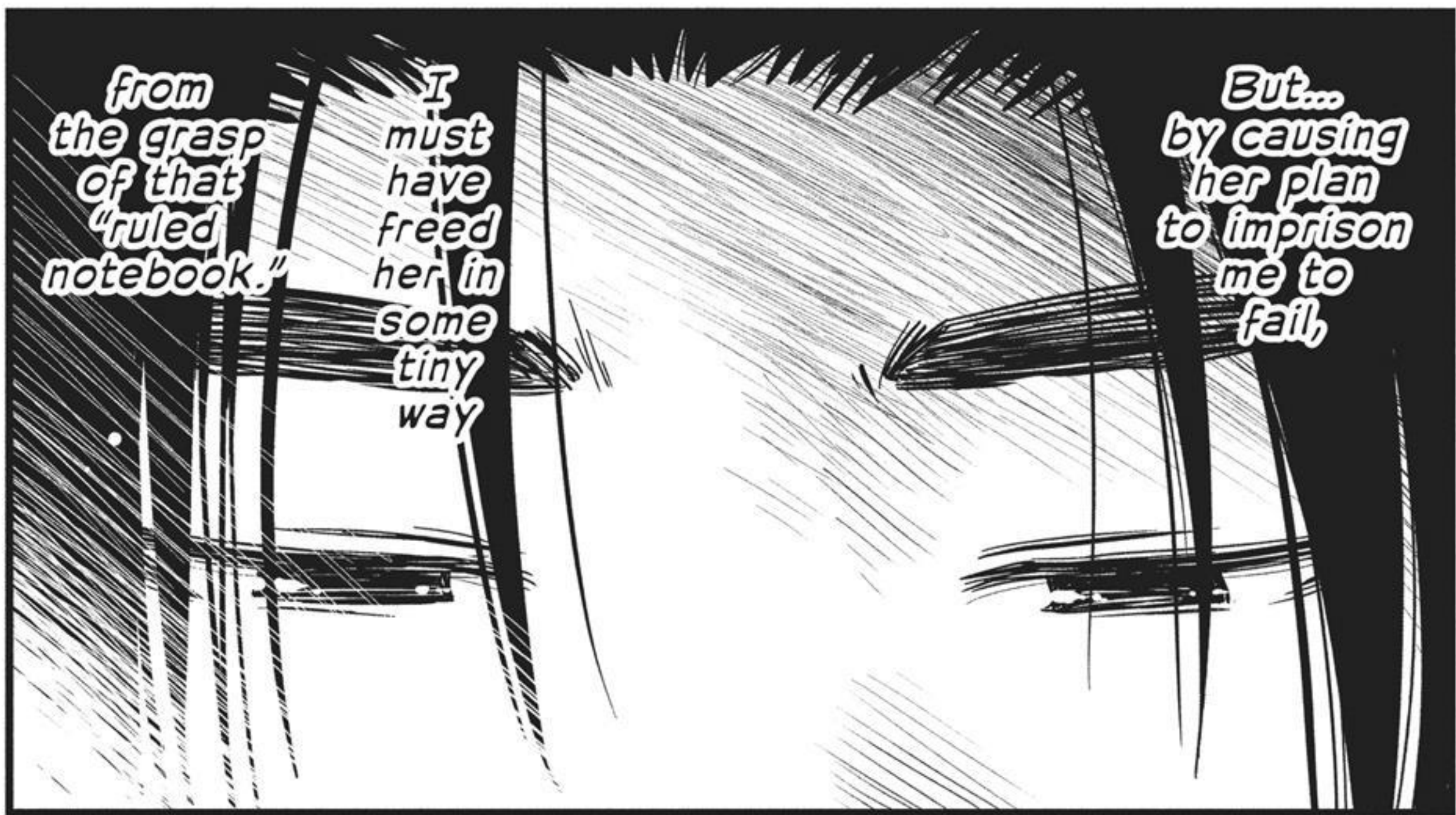


*It  
wouldn't  
be  
enough  
to  
compare  
her to  
a taut  
string.*

*She was  
like a  
rubber  
band that  
had been  
stretched  
too thin...*

*Pushed  
as far as  
she could  
possibly  
go...*

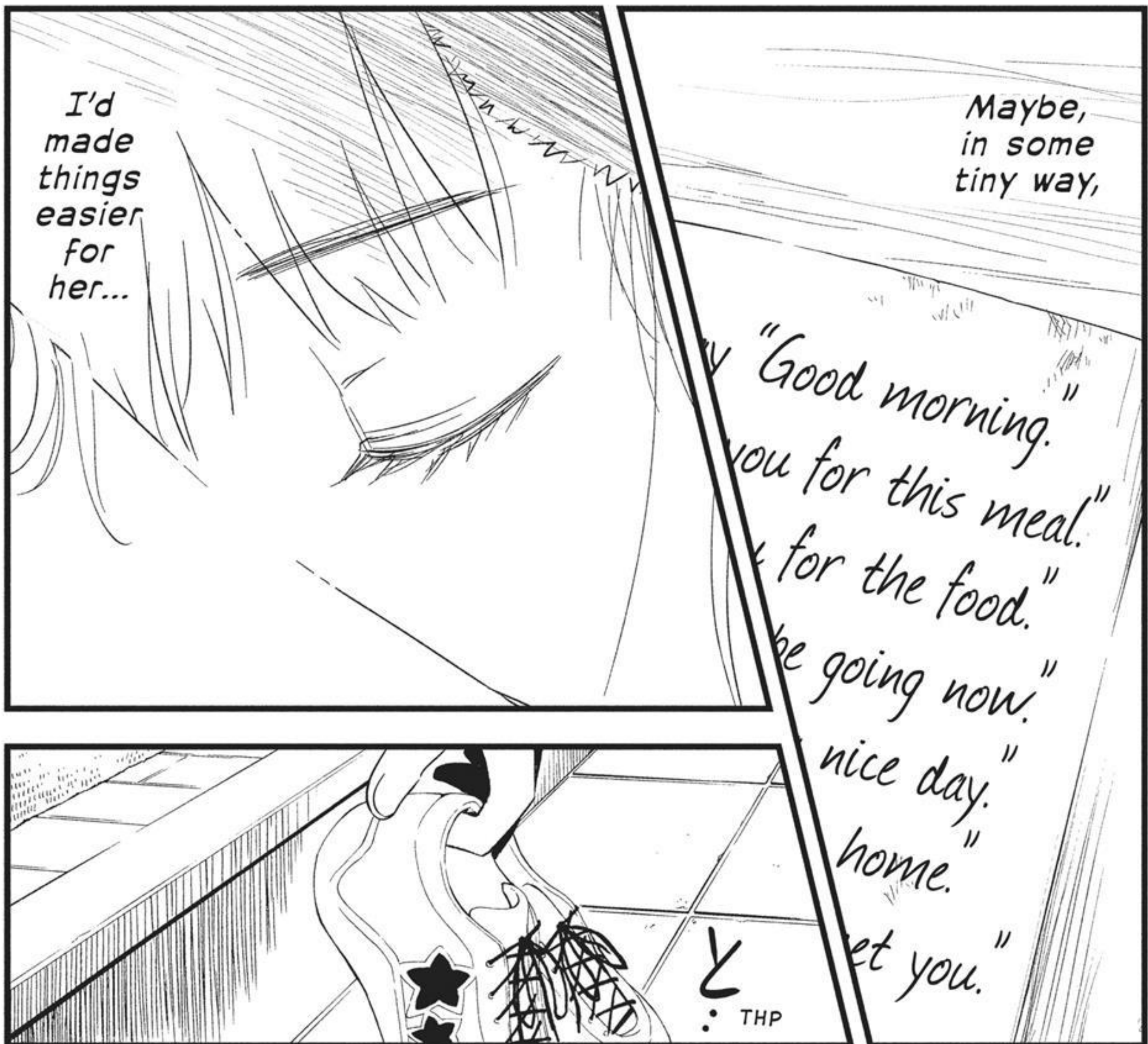




from  
the grasp  
of that  
"ruled  
notebook."

I  
must  
have  
freed  
her in  
some  
tiny  
way

But...  
by causing  
her plan  
to imprison  
me to  
fail,



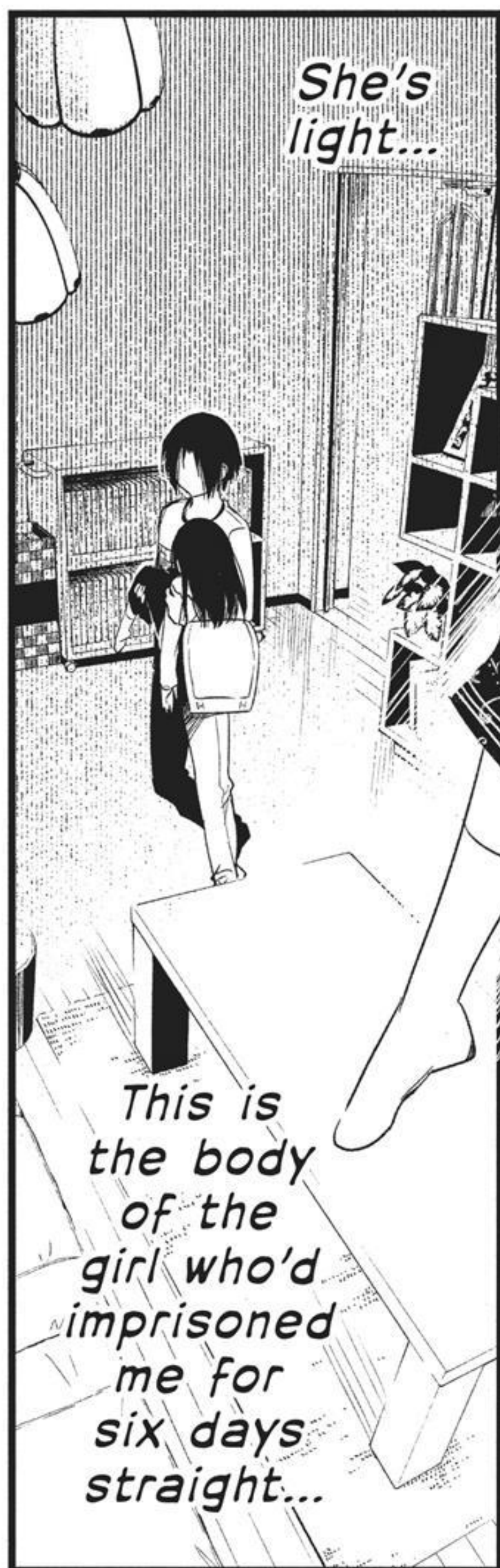
I'd  
made  
things  
easier  
for  
her...

Maybe,  
in some  
tiny way,

"Good morning."  
"Thank you for this meal."  
"Thank you for the food."  
"I'm going now."  
"Have a nice day."  
"Goodbye."  
"I'll see you."

THP





*She's  
light...*

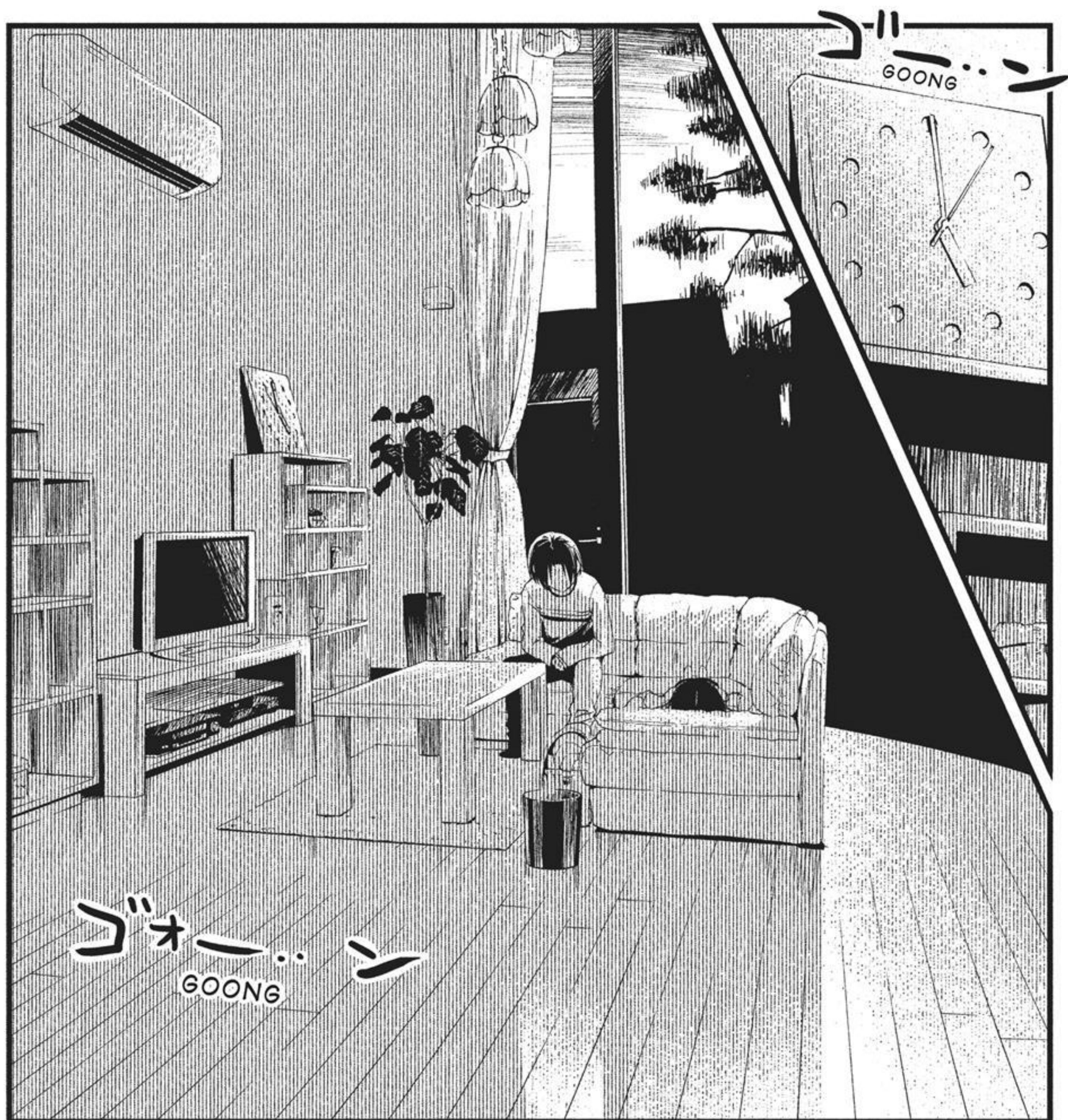
*This is  
the body  
of the  
girl who'd  
imprisoned  
me for  
six days  
straight...*



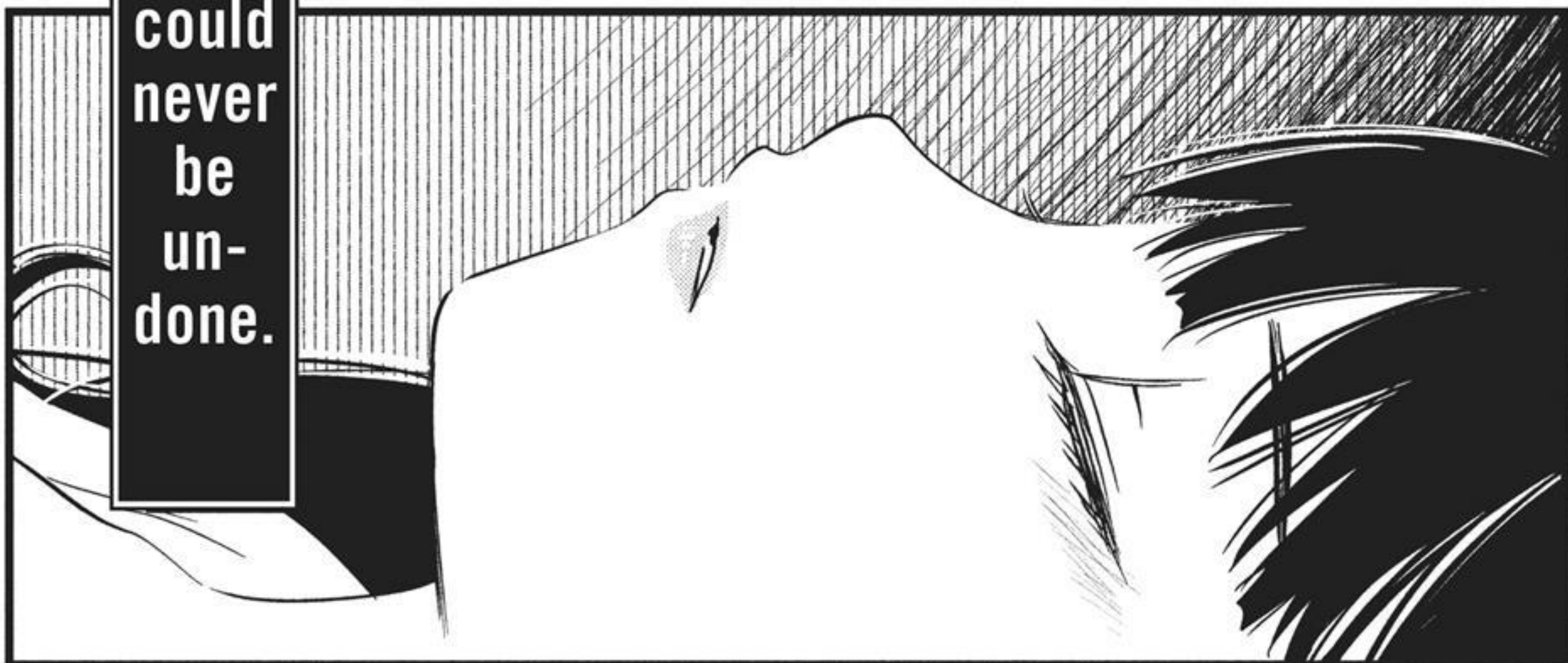
*But  
she's not  
baggage.  
She's a  
person.*

*She weighs  
about the  
same as a  
piece of  
baggage  
I could  
carry in one  
hand...*









This  
girl's  
life

has gone  
so far off  
the rails  
that the  
damage

could  
never  
be  
un-  
done.





is  
that  
really  
the  
case?

Is it really  
possible to  
put U's life  
back on  
track after  
all of this?



"Of  
course  
it's  
possible  
for her to  
recover,"

or  
...

I'm  
sure  
some  
people  
would  
say,



I...

don't  
think  
it is.

"Plenty of  
people with  
her kind of  
background  
end up  
leading  
respectable  
lives."

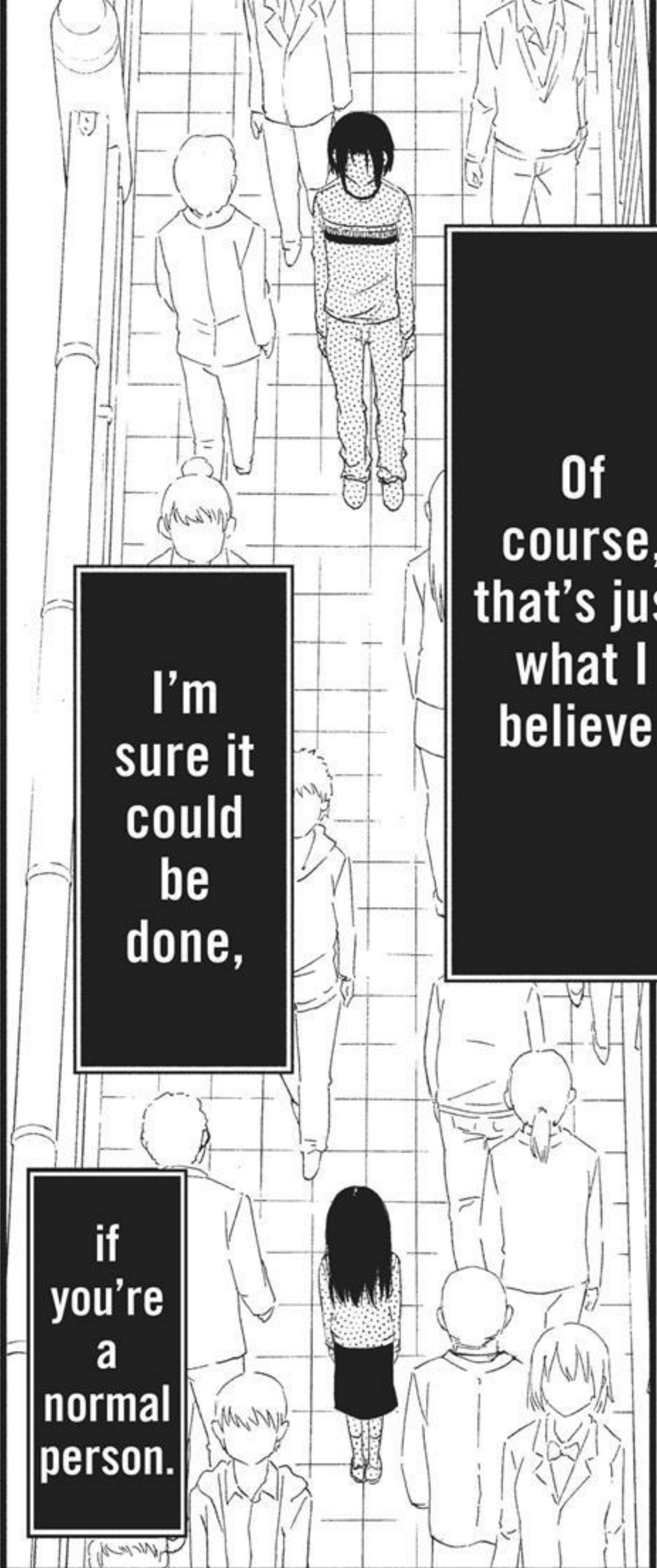
But  
...





But  
it would  
require an  
absolutely  
immense  
amount of  
effort

and an  
endless  
amount  
of time  
...



I'm  
sure it  
could  
be  
done,

if  
you're  
a  
normal  
person.


Of  
course,  
that's just  
what I  
believe.



I could  
change U  
or protect  
her.

Which  
is why  
there's  
no way





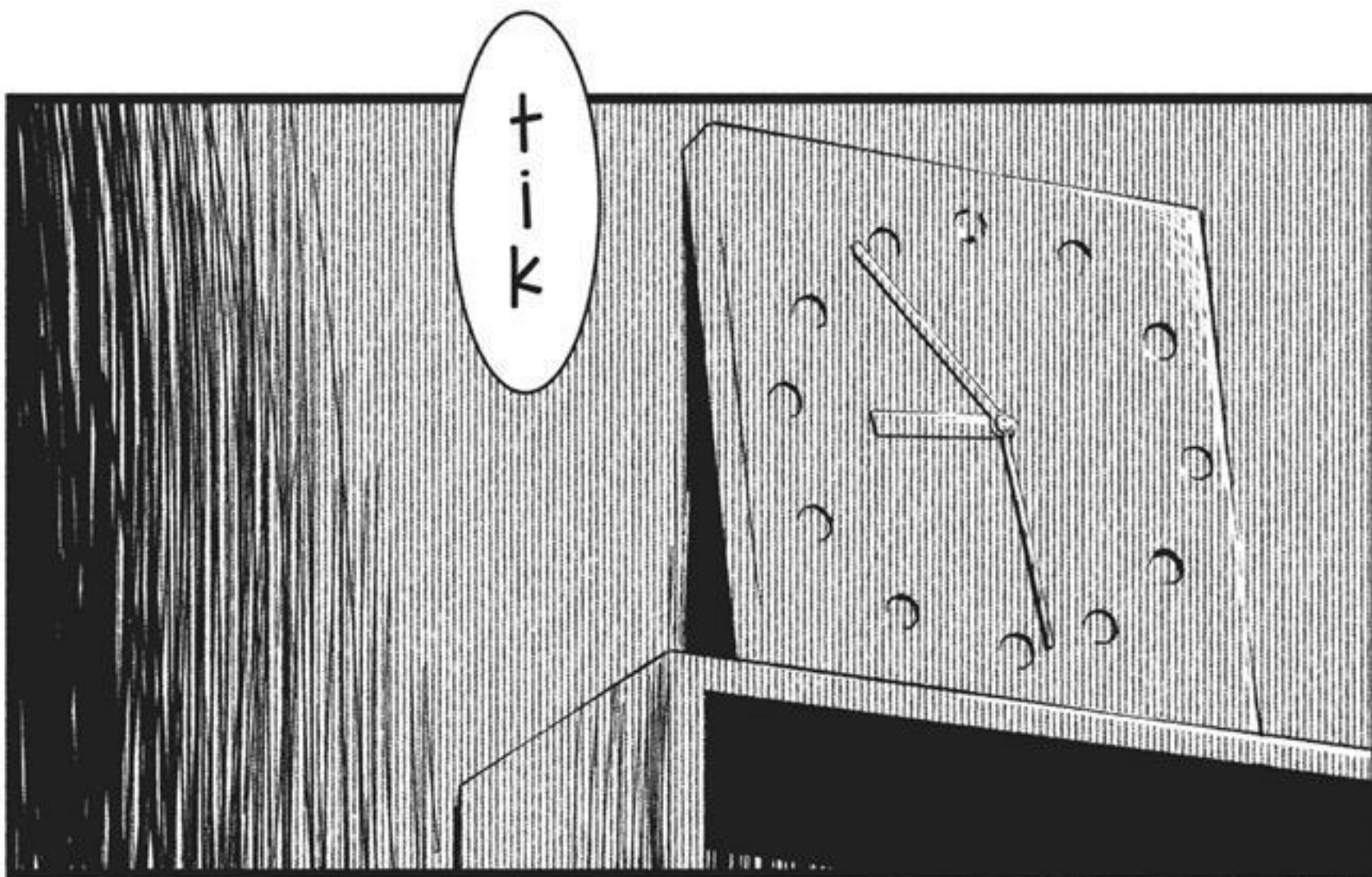
There's no  
way I could  
do anything  
self-sacrificing  
for U's sake.

I have my  
hands full  
just taking  
care of  
myself.

After all,  
I'm just a  
regular,  
dime-a-  
dozen  
guy.

Nothing  
more than  
an aspiring  
author still  
in college,  
so...

















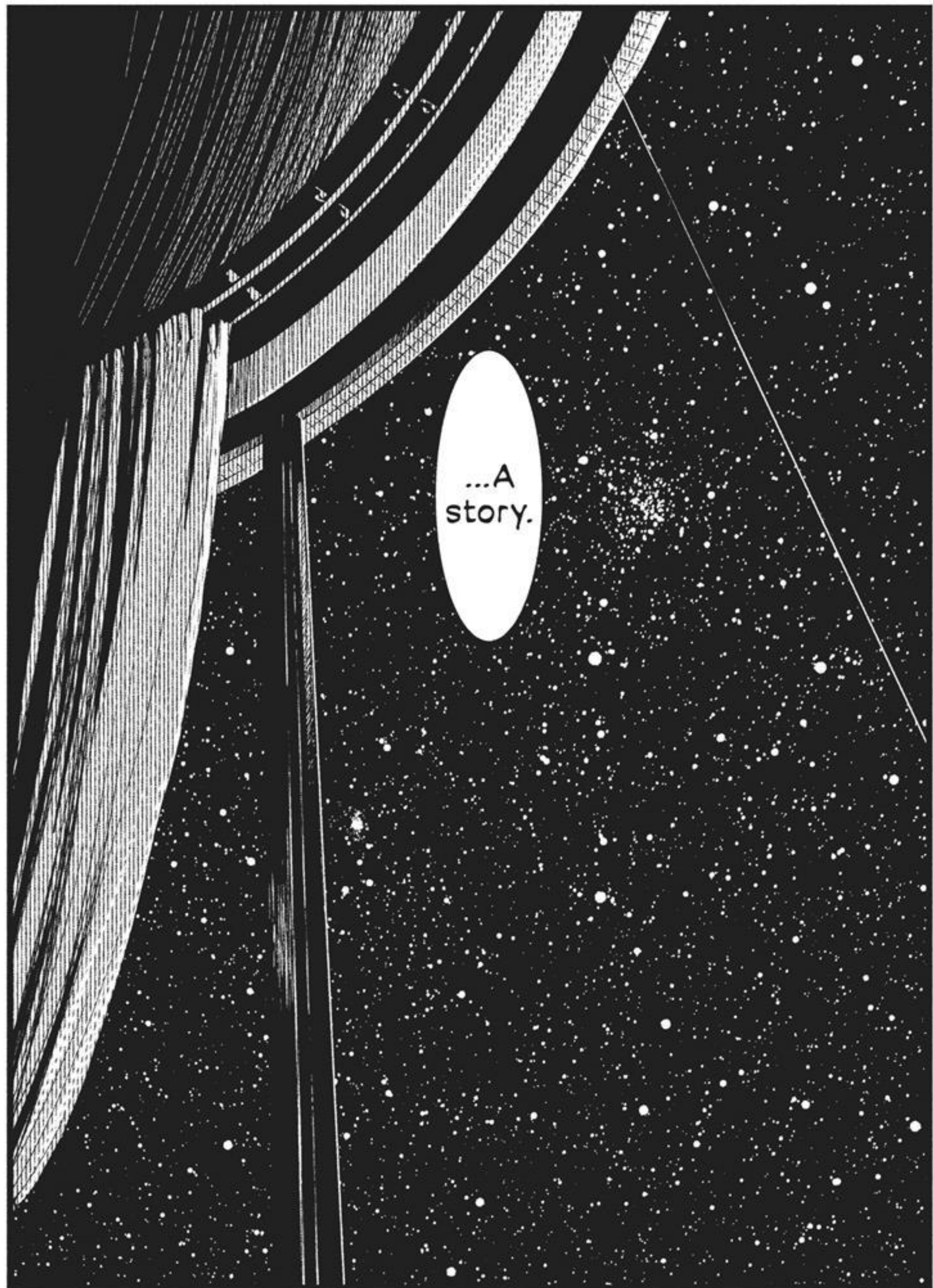




Huh  
...?

Tell  
me...  
a  
story.

Please  
...



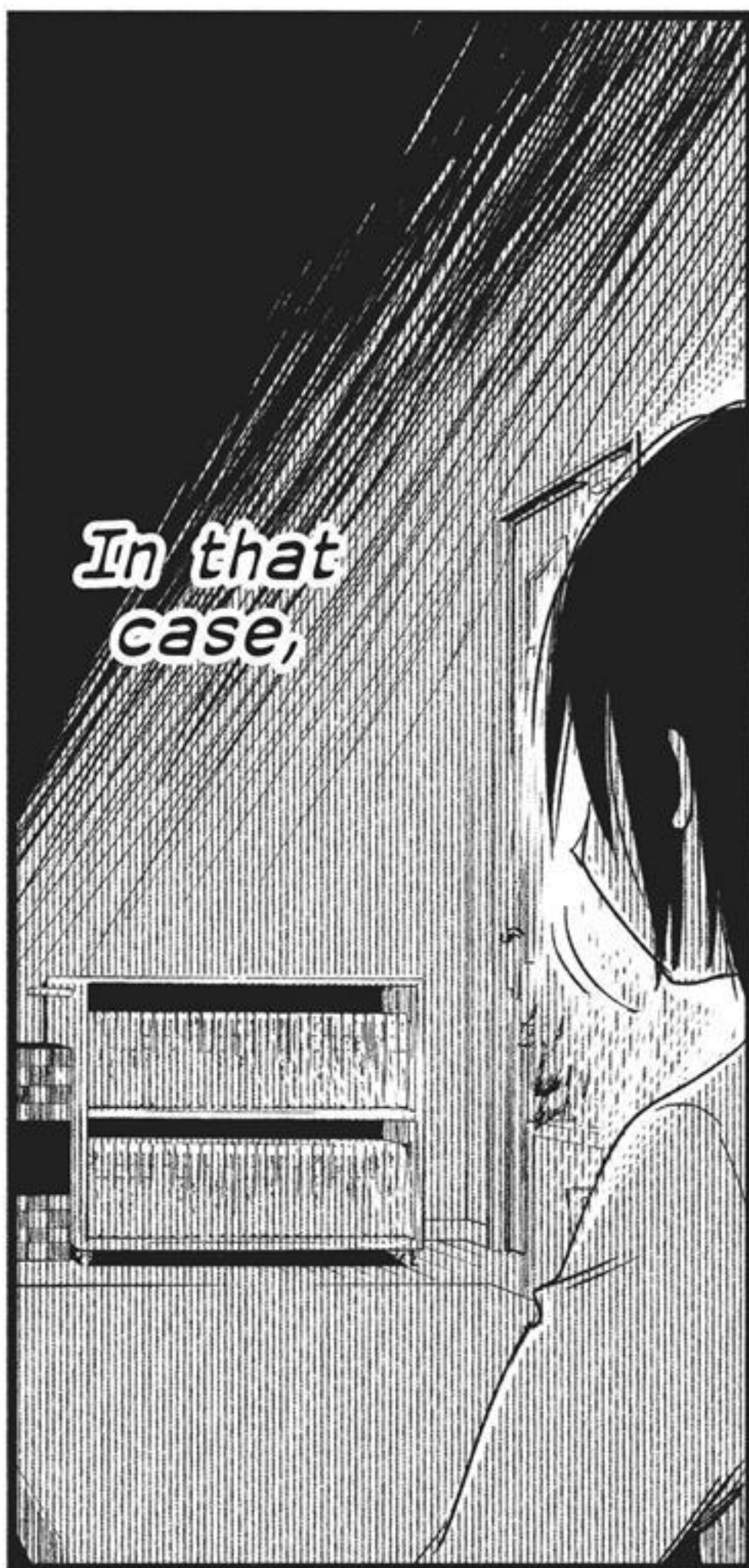
...A  
story.



Daddy  
and Mommy...  
used to tell  
me stories,  
too...

I'll be  
able to  
sleep if  
you do...





*In that case,*



*when and where*

*did everything go so wrong...?*



*...So there was a time in her life like that.*



*Until I fell asleep ...*

*they told me stories*

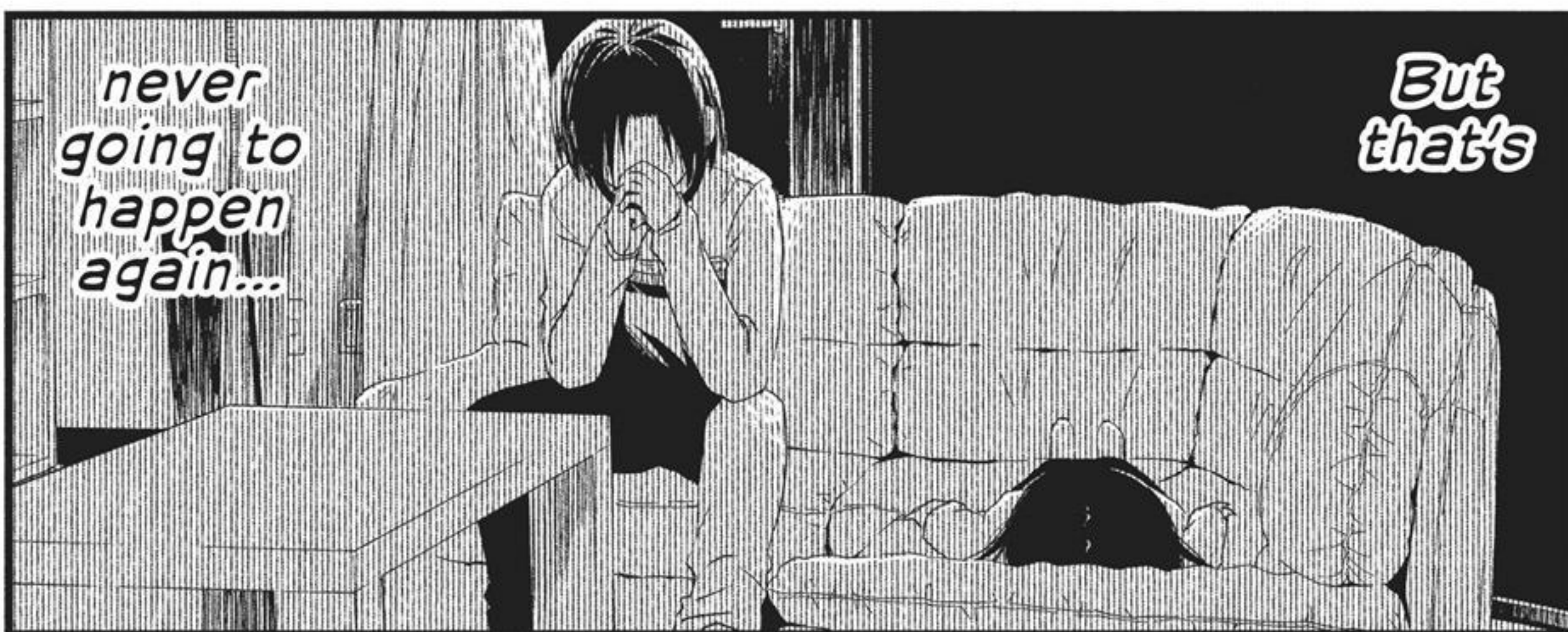
*by my side...*





*Tales of  
Momotaro,  
Cinderella,  
and Snow  
White...*

*There  
was a  
time when  
this family  
gathered in  
this bed to  
read to-  
gether.*



*never  
going to  
happen  
again...*

*But  
that's*



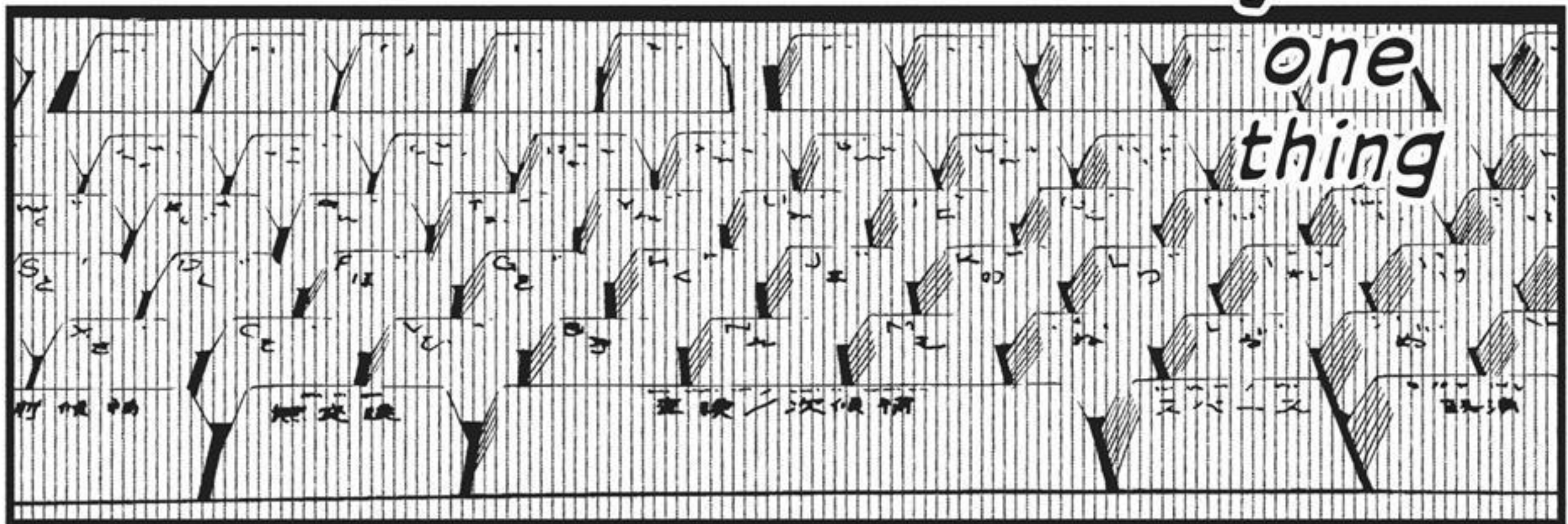
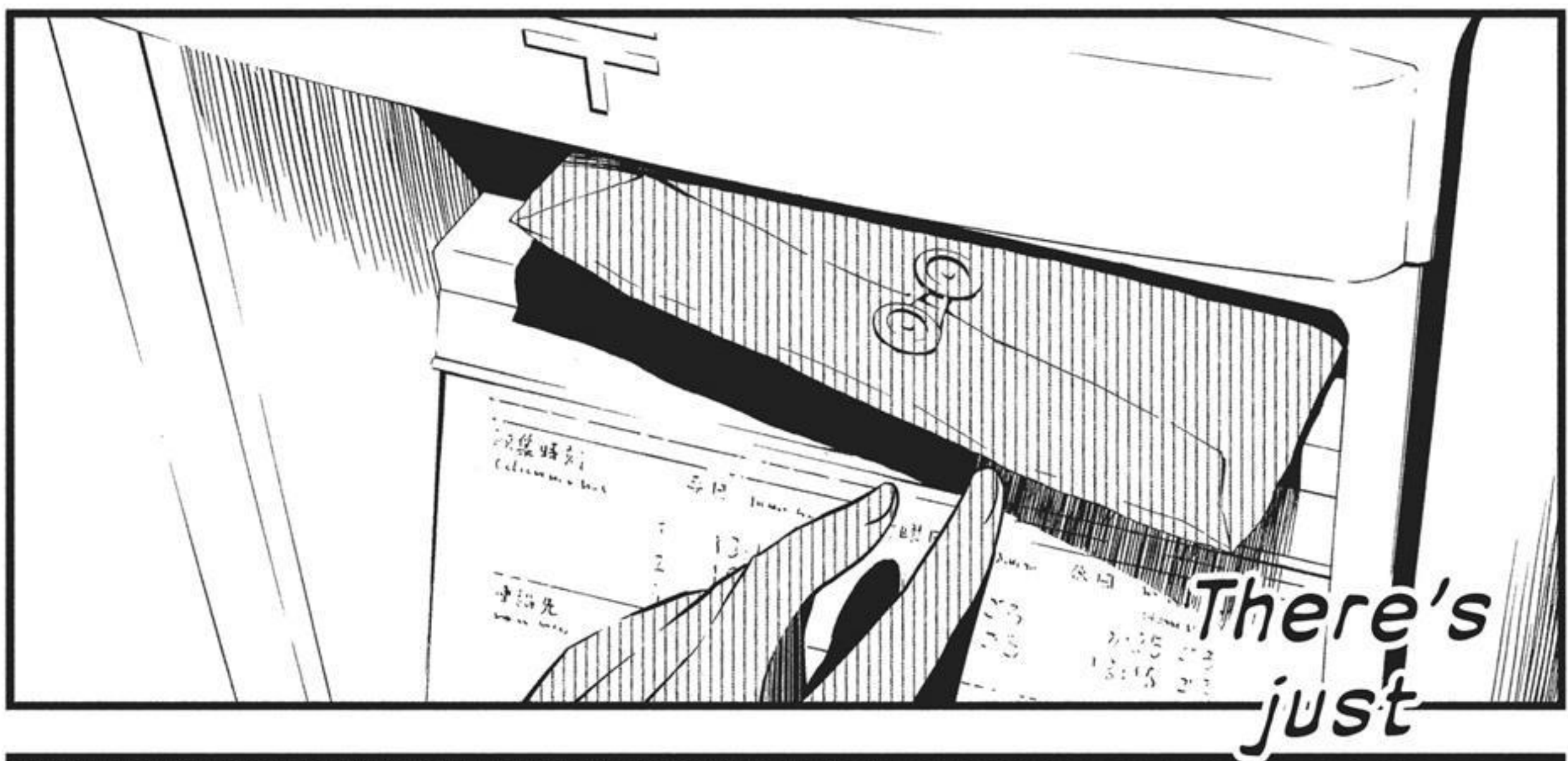
*and  
their lone  
daughter  
who laid  
there and  
listened  
to them  
is alive,  
but just  
barely...*

*GRIP*

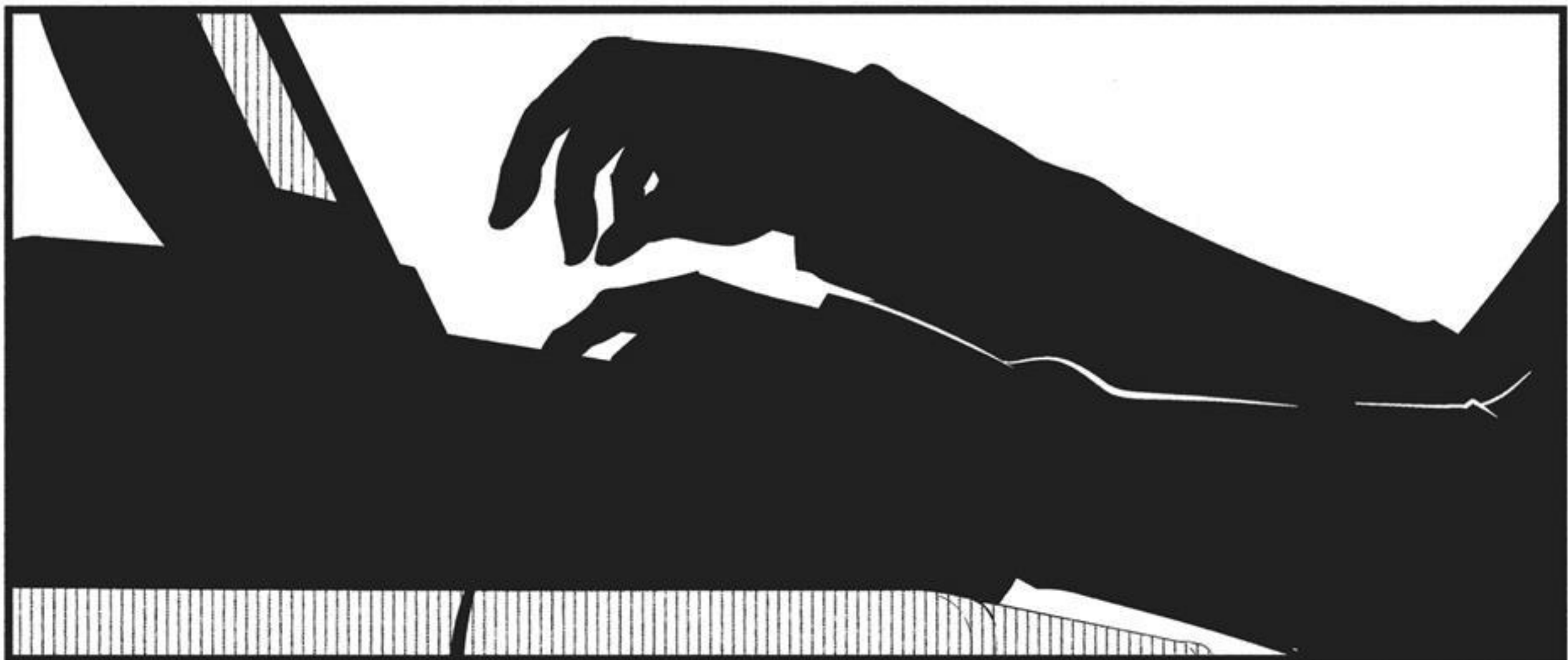
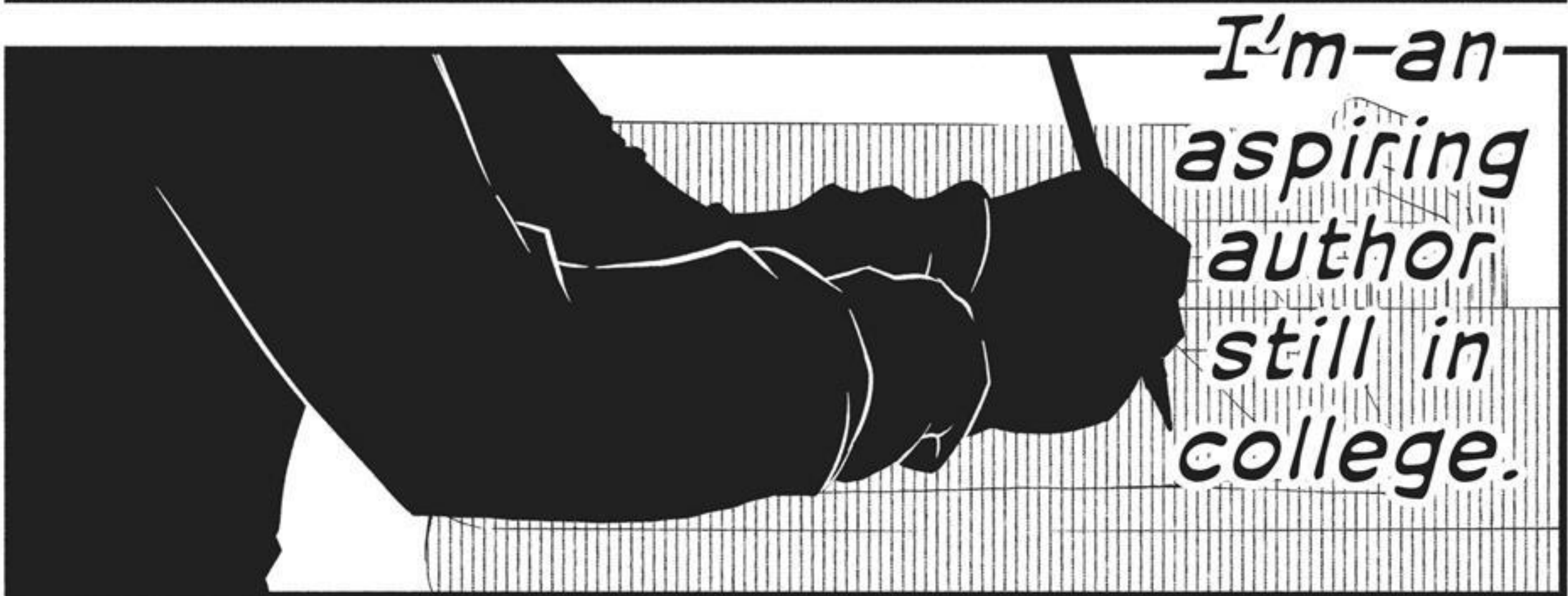
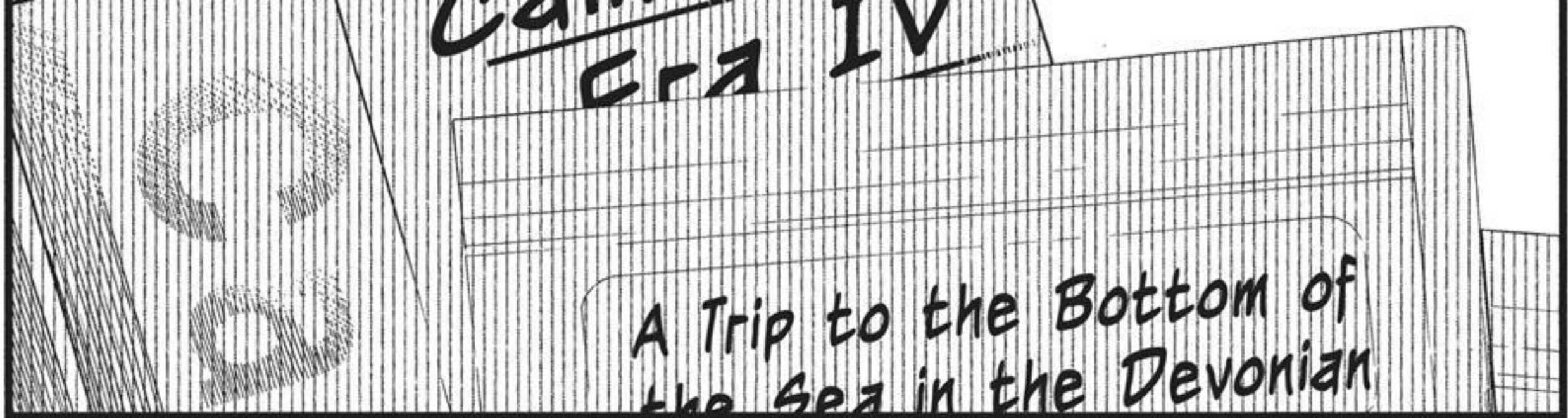
*The  
parents  
who read  
those  
tales are  
dead...*

...













*there is  
something*

*I  
can  
do  
for  
U.*









And  
so,



I  
began  
my  
stories.







*But  
the  
fairy  
tales*

*that I  
began  
telling  
U*

*weren't like  
Momotaro,  
where the  
righteous and  
strong are  
victorious.*

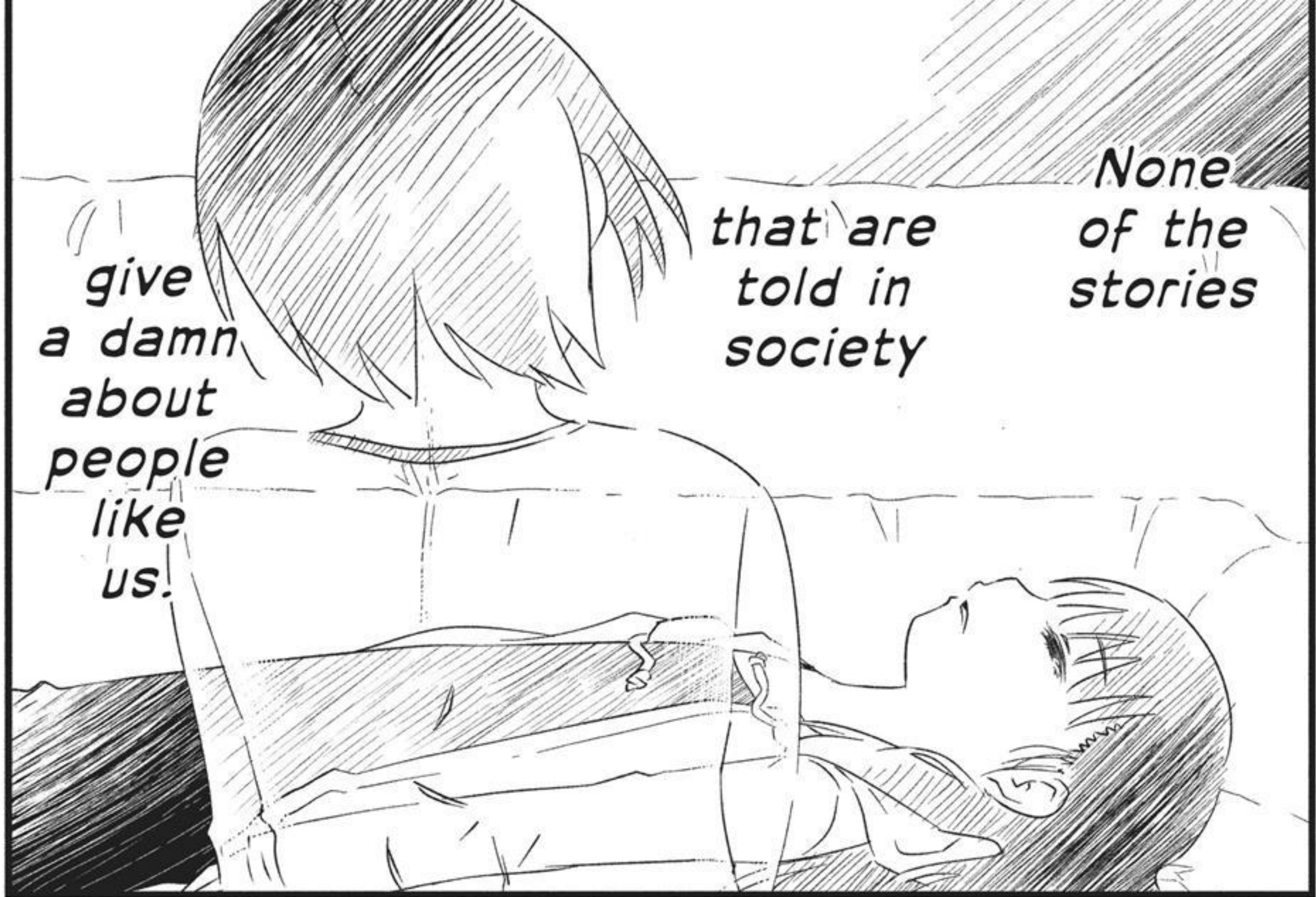


*or Snow  
White,  
either.*



*Nor were  
they like  
Cinderella*





give  
a damn  
about  
people  
like  
us.

that are  
told in  
society

None  
of the  
stories



That's  
why I  
invented  
my own  
tales,

right  
there,  
on the  
spot.



But  
how  
could  
I tell  
u

those  
kinds of  
moralistic,  
preachy  
stories  
now?



They  
say to be  
righteous, to  
be strong,  
to be pure,  
to be  
honest.






*A tale of a boy who does everything he can to stay alive, relying on his voice alone, and a brilliant blue-haired girl who controls the world.*

*A tale of a brother with an unhealthy infatuation with his little sister and a high school girl who can't stand ambiguity.*

*A tale of a grade schooler who tries to save the Earth through mere wits and bravery and a magical girl who dreams of growing and maturing.*

*A tale of a murderer who prizes familial love and a knit cap that draws people to the allure of killing.*






A  
tale of  
a martial  
artist who  
learns the  
meaning of  
defeat and  
a martial  
artist who  
ignores  
it.

A tale  
of an  
emotionless  
giant raised  
on a  
remote island  
and a  
volatile  
little girl  
burned by  
the flames of  
hatred and  
anger.

A  
tale  
of a man  
who hates  
going  
to the  
movie  
theatre  
and his  
17th little  
sister.

A  
tale of a  
hypocrite  
who saves  
a dying  
monster and  
the vampire  
that comes  
to love  
him.





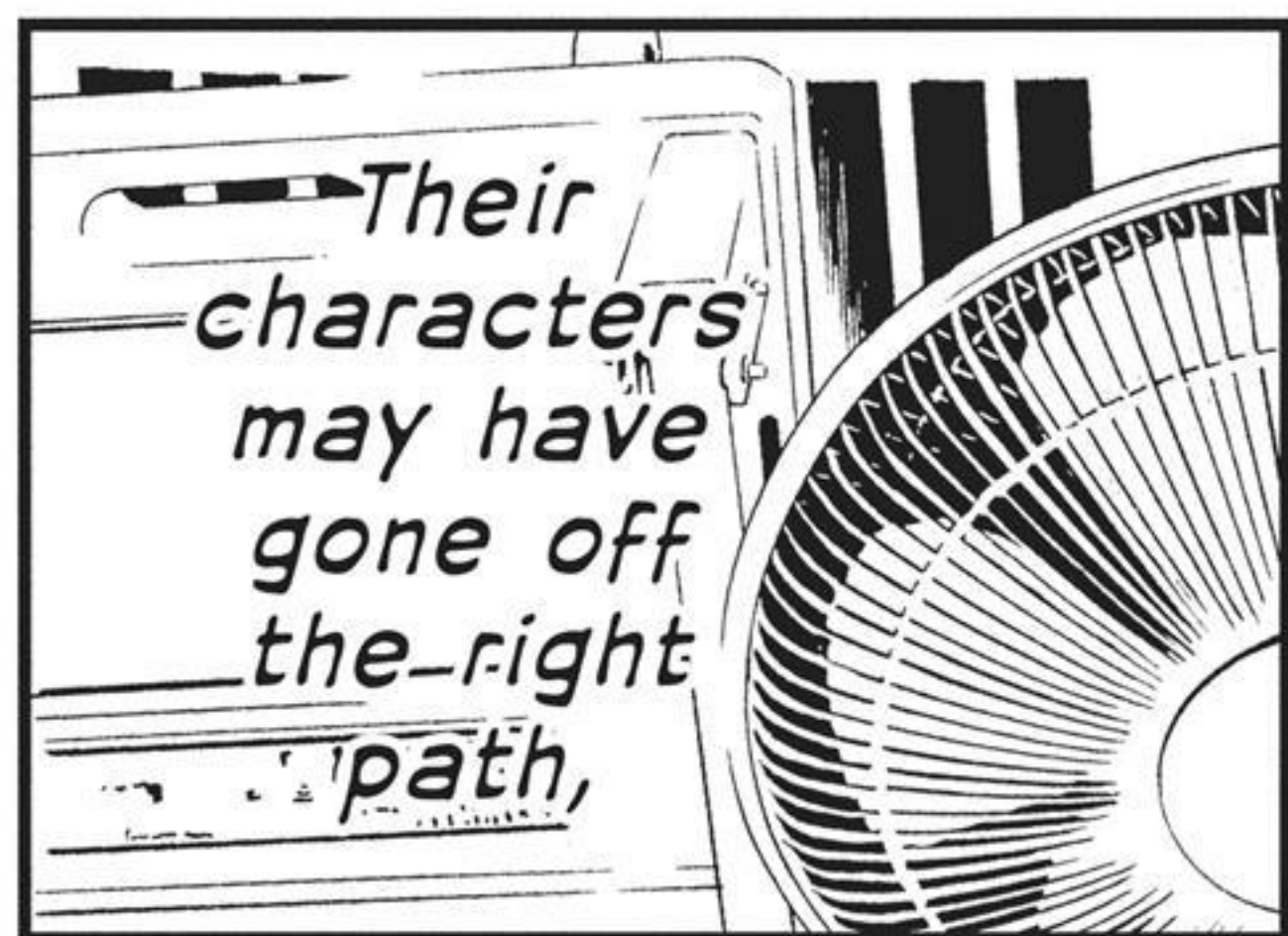
A  
tale of a  
female ninja  
who exists  
as nothing  
more than a  
will and the  
leader whom  
she protects.

A  
tale of a  
contractor  
who  
constantly  
fails no  
matter what,  
and the  
detective  
who gladly  
puts  
himself  
at her  
mercy.

A  
tale of  
a heavy  
reader with  
a strange  
bias  
and an  
oddball  
who lives  
in a  
bookstore.

A  
tale of  
a popular  
author  
whose  
books sell  
despite his  
wishes and  
his niece  
who's on  
the hunt  
for a  
job.









So  
please, U.  
Listen  
to me.

That's  
right.

Always listen carefully to  
Always do your!

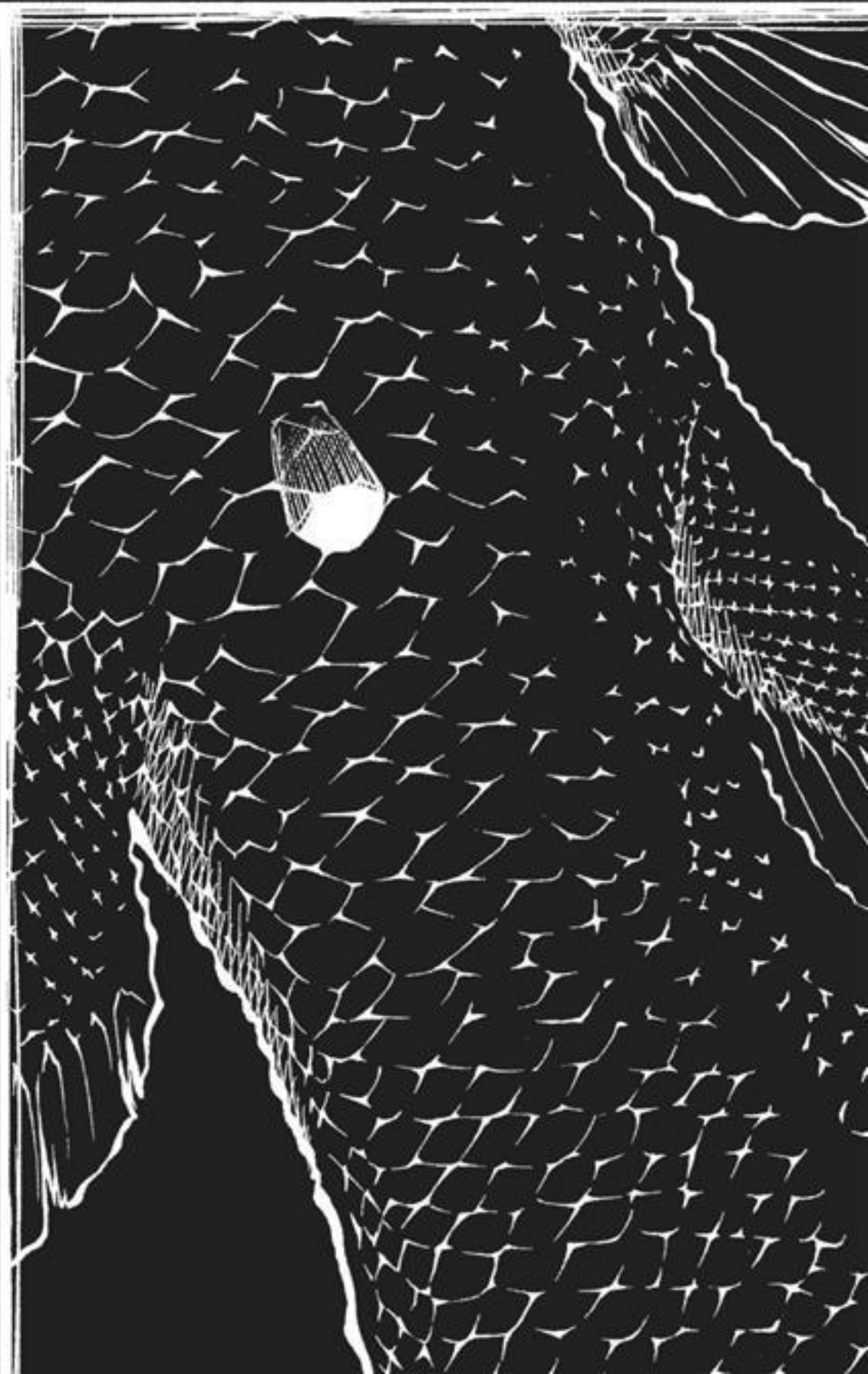
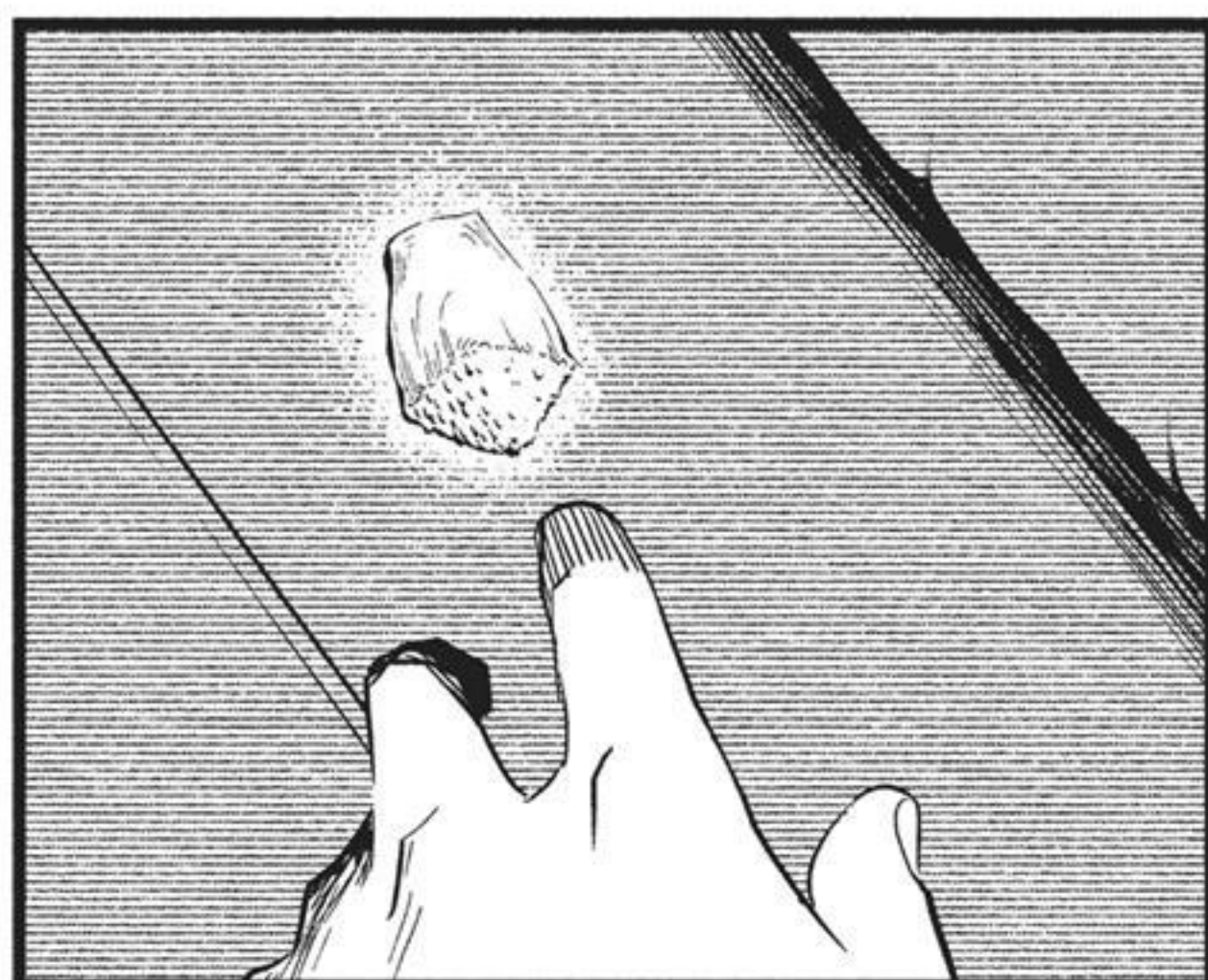
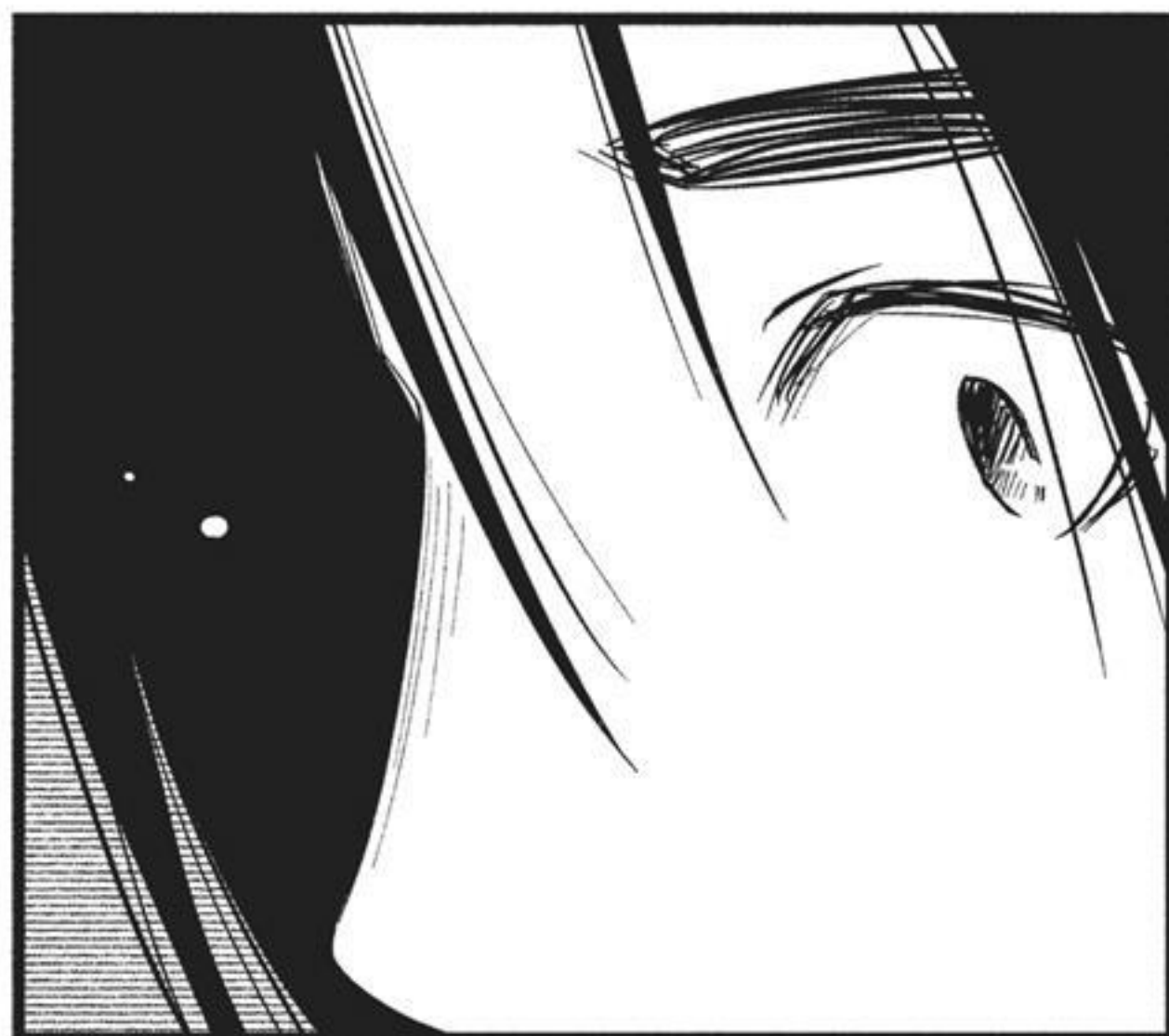


But,  
well...

it's  
not so  
bad that  
you need  
to deny  
yourself  
happiness.

Your  
life has  
already  
been  
thrown  
into  
chaos.









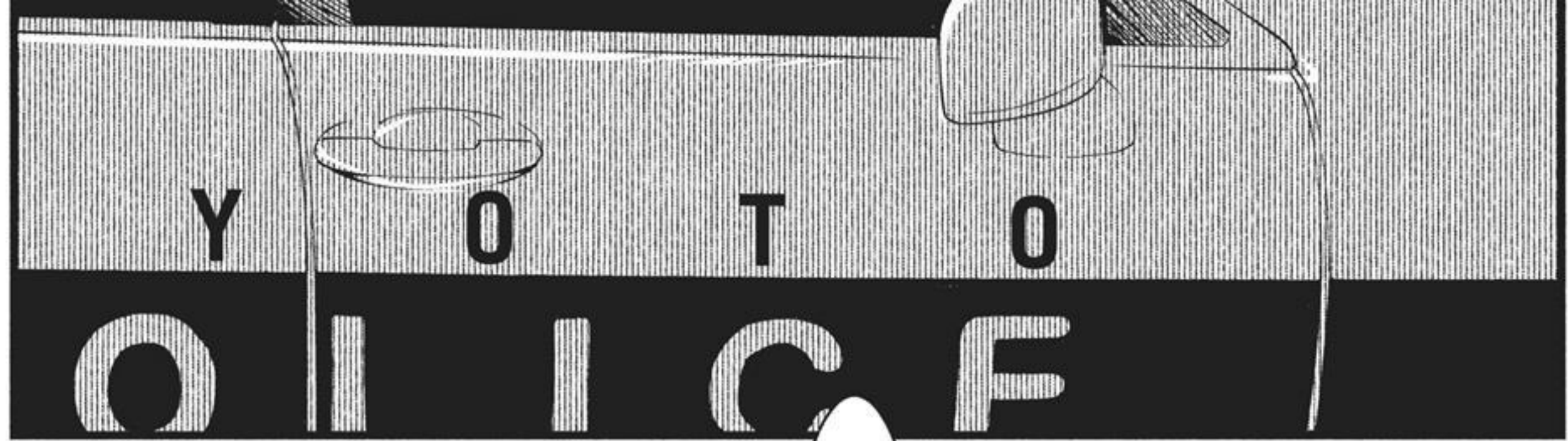




And  
so,

this  
inci-  
dent  
came  
to an  
end.





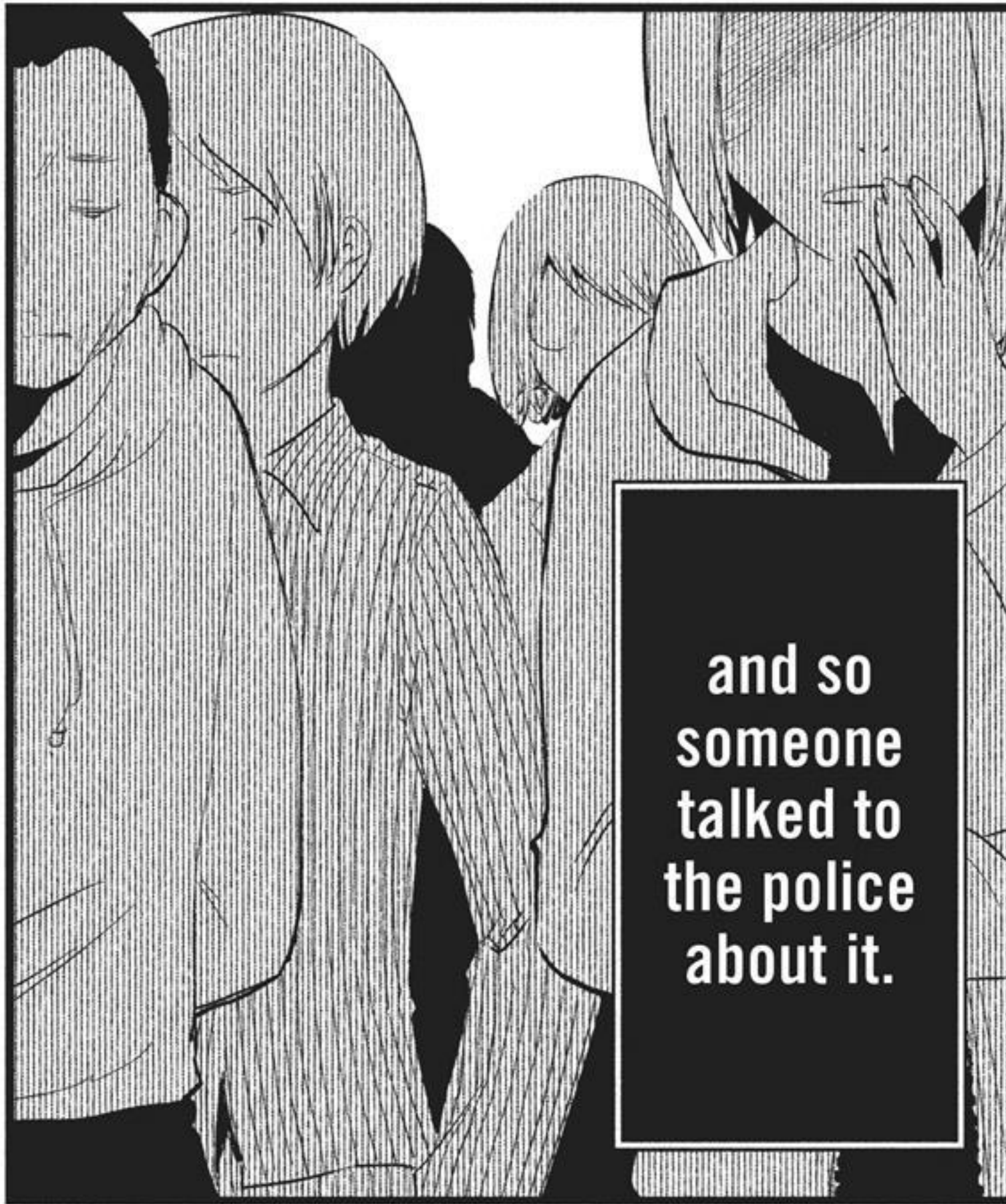
or if I  
should  
say,  
“finally.”



I’m not  
sure if I  
should  
say,  
“at last,”







and so  
someone  
talked to  
the police  
about it.



I never  
looked into  
it properly,  
so I can't  
say for  
sure,

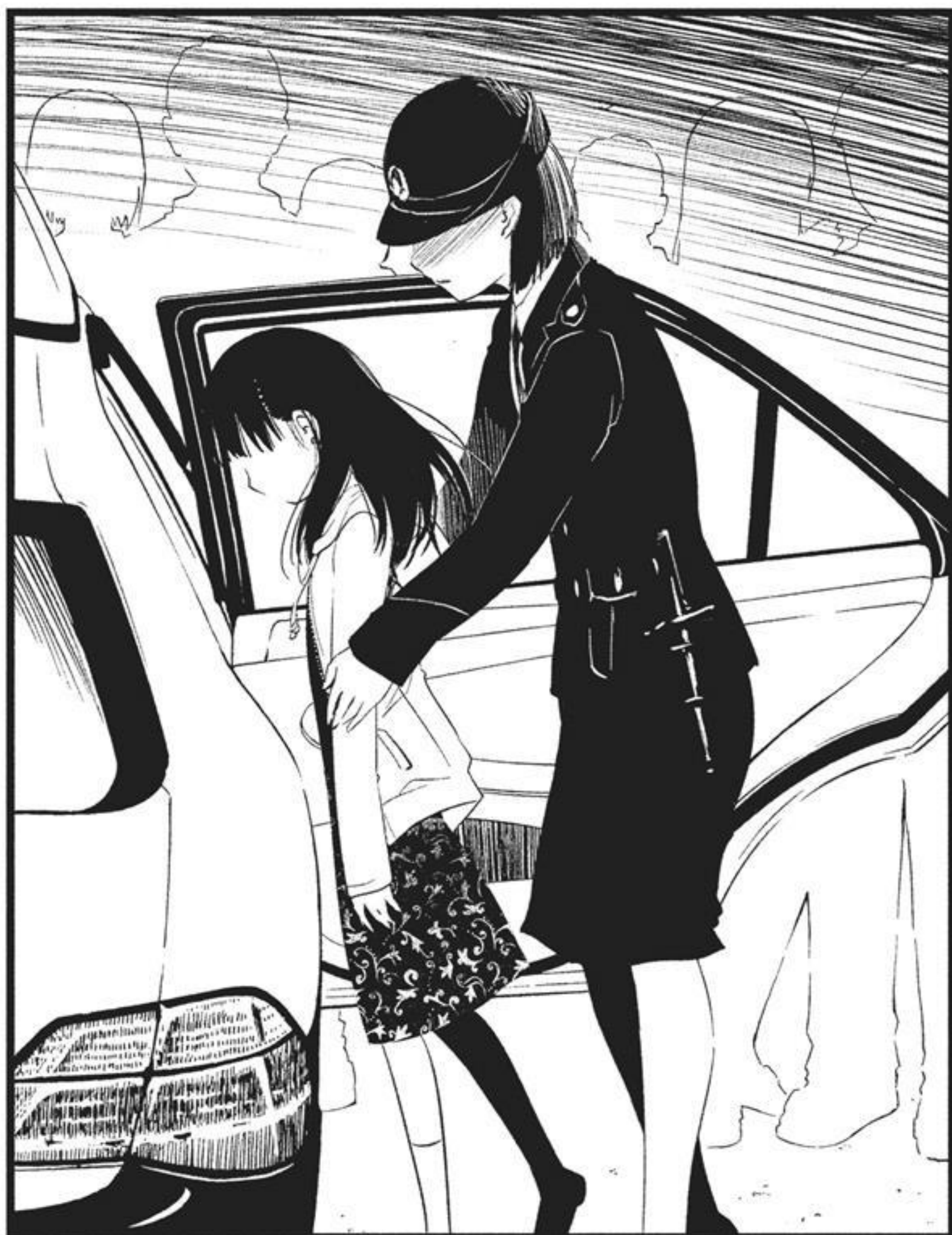
but  
apparently  
U's actions  
outside  
the home  
seemed  
odd and  
suspicious in  
some way,





or  
tell  
her  
the  
same.

I  
never  
got  
to  
hear  
her  
say  
good-  
bye



From my  
perspective,  
maybe I  
should be  
saying that  
I made it  
out just in  
time.

This  
dramatic  
little  
imprisonment  
had  
already failed  
at some point  
along the  
line...

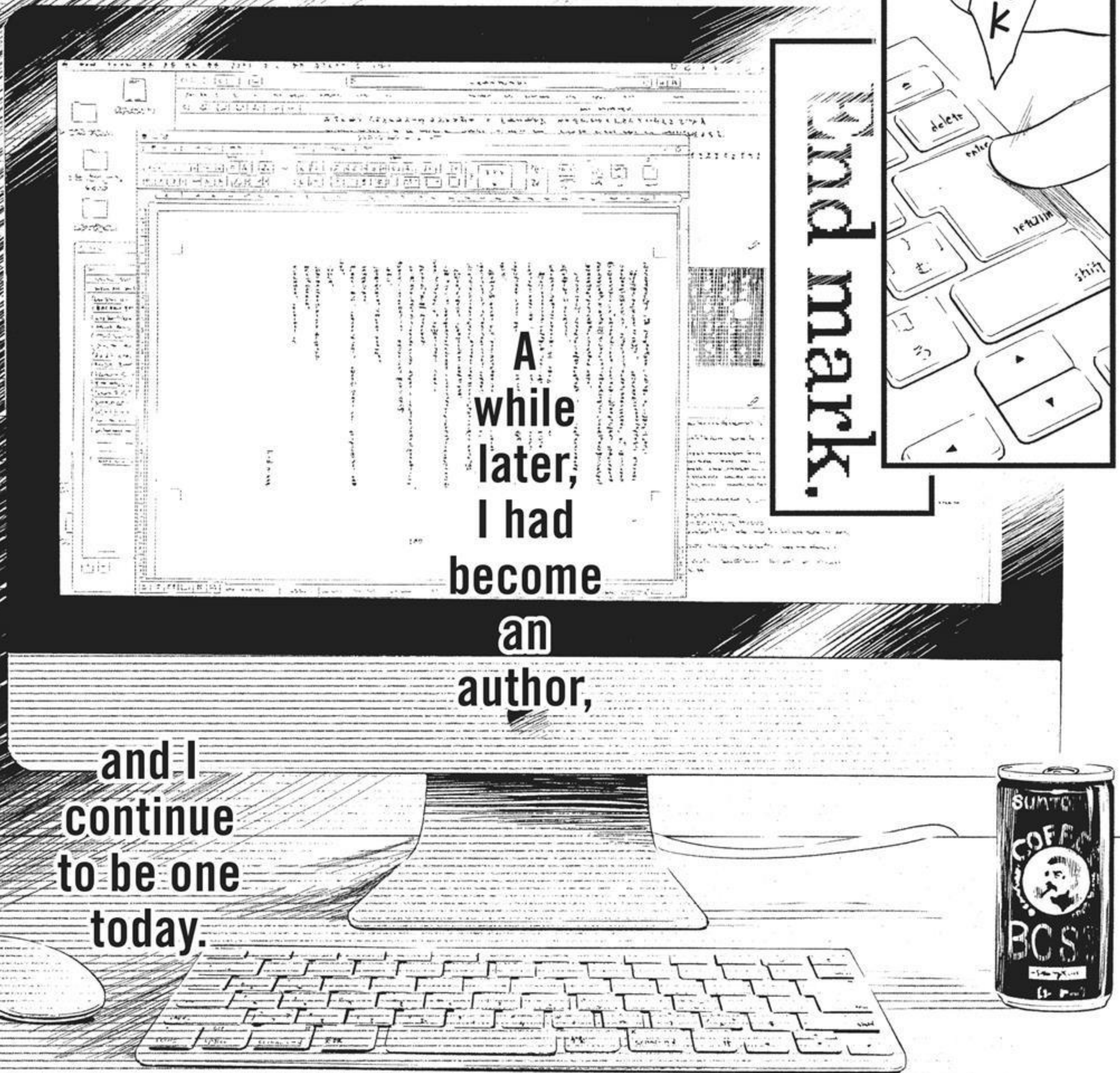


**That  
was  
the last  
I ever  
saw of  
U.**

**Because  
I'd  
finished  
saying  
to U  
every-  
thing I  
needed  
to say.**

**I'd  
finished  
telling her  
everything  
I needed  
to tell  
her.**





and mark.

and I  
continue  
to be one  
today.



I don't  
recall ever  
writing  
something  
I'd call a  
"novel."

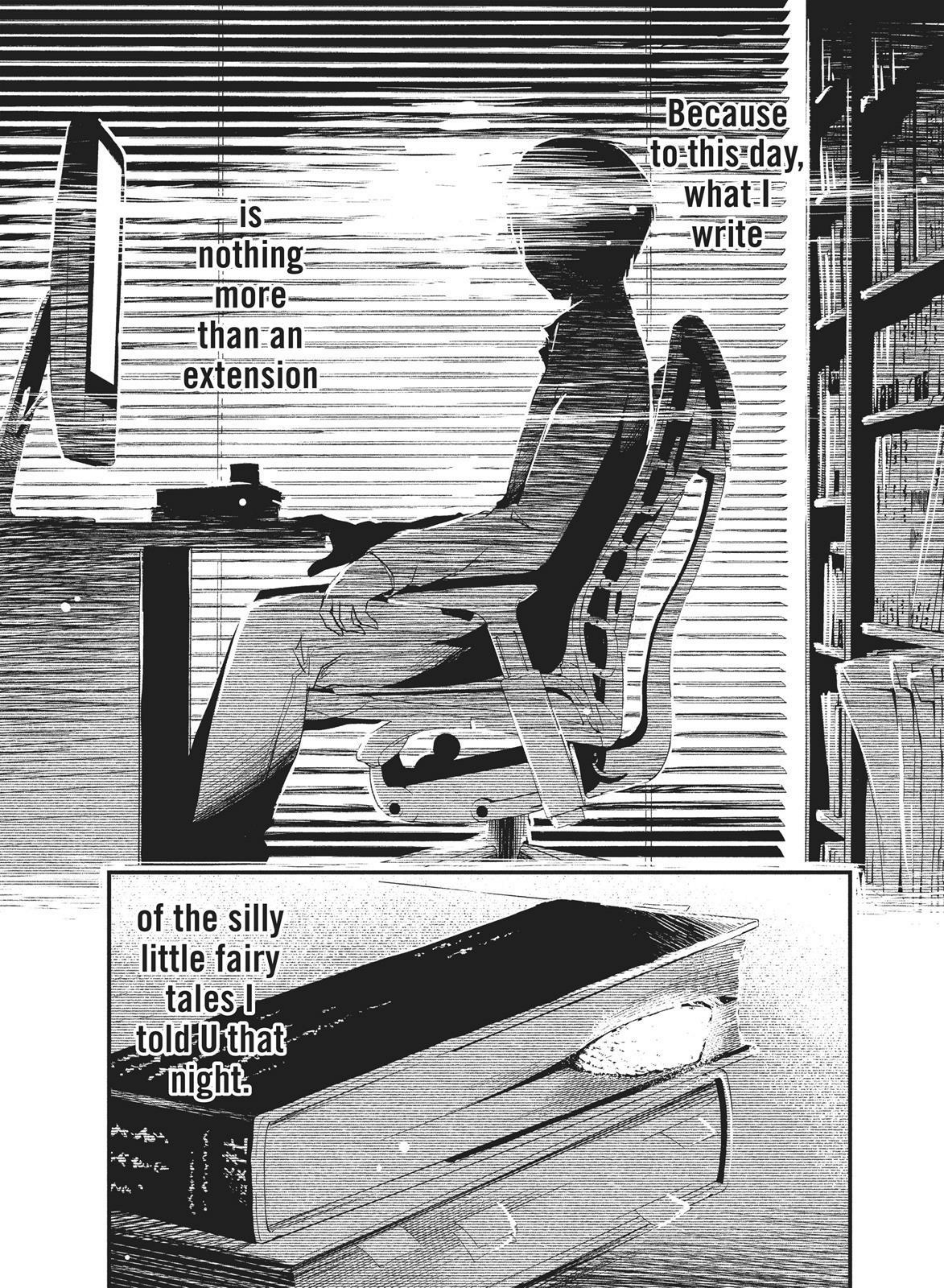
But although  
my novels  
have been my  
livelihood for  
about ten  
years now,



is  
nothing  
more  
than an  
extension

Because  
to this day,  
what I  
write

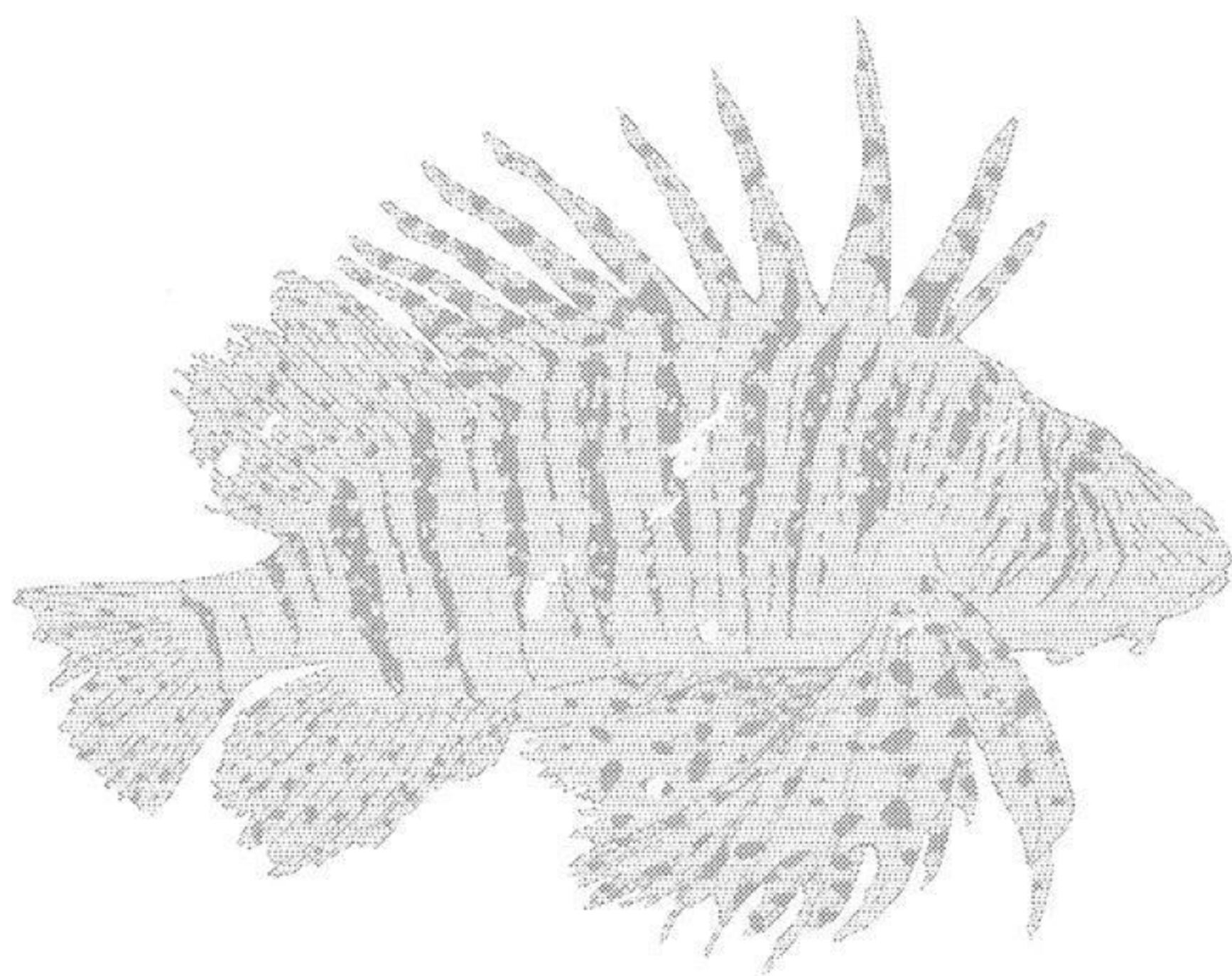
of the silly  
little fairy  
tales I  
told U that  
night.



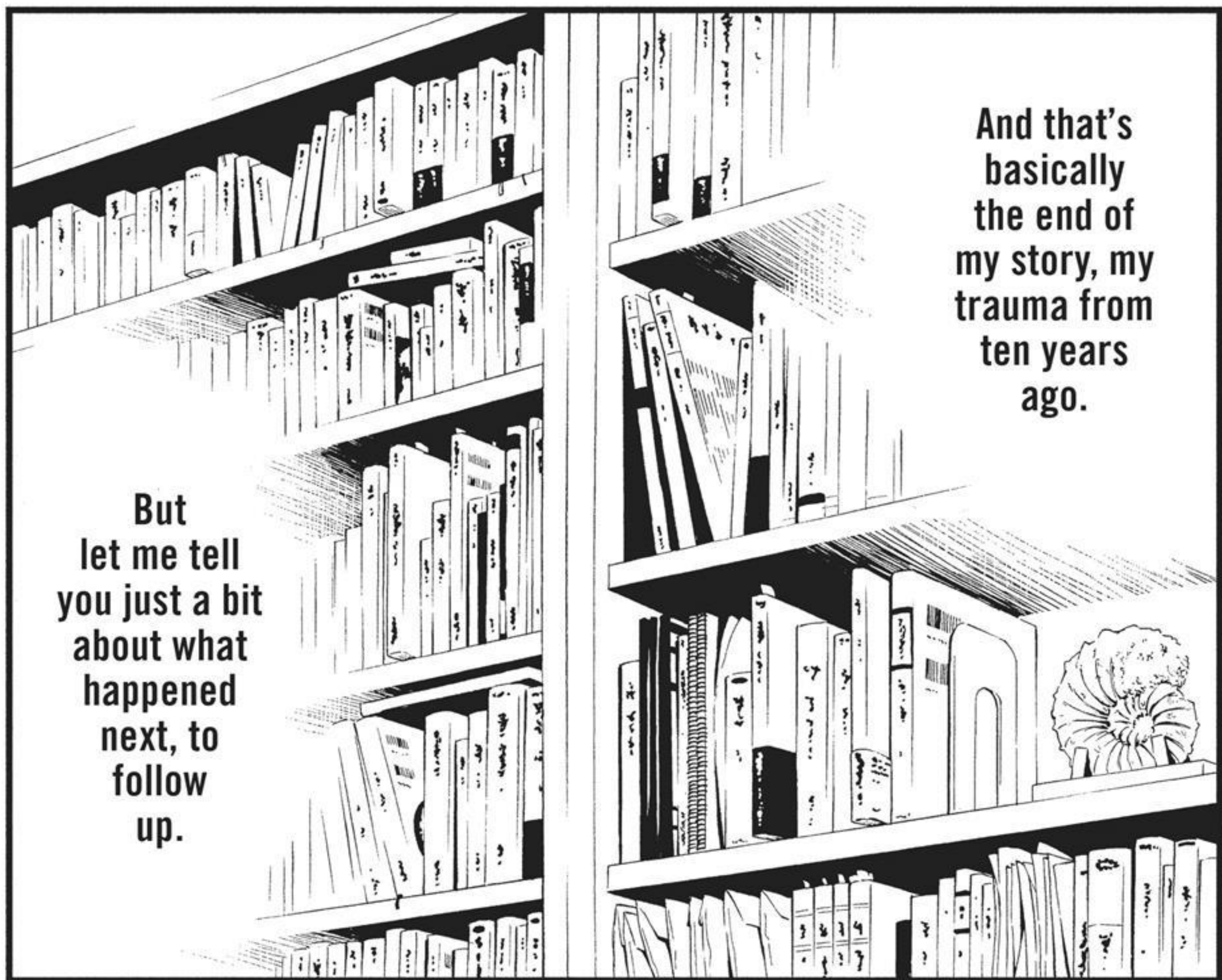






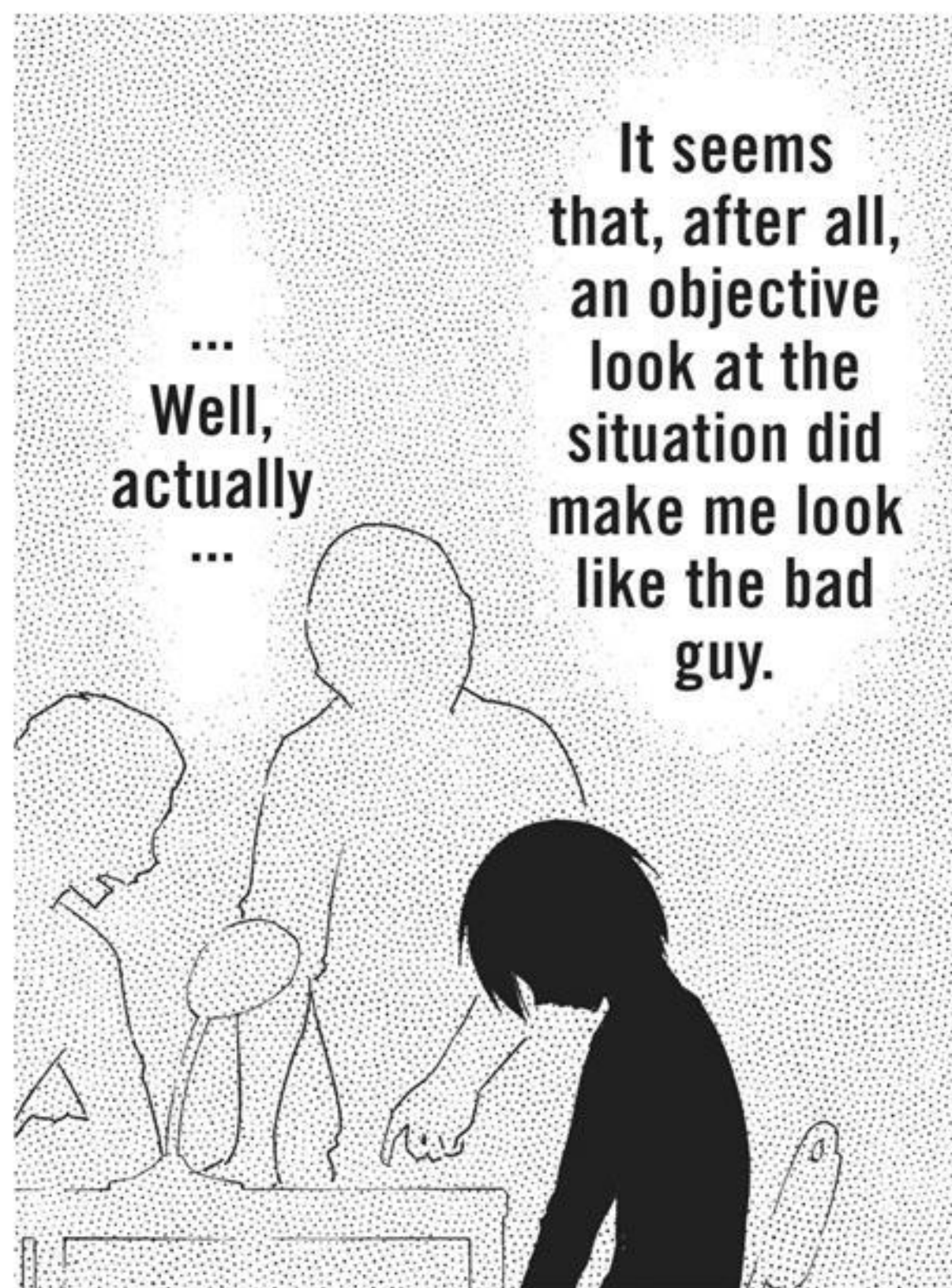






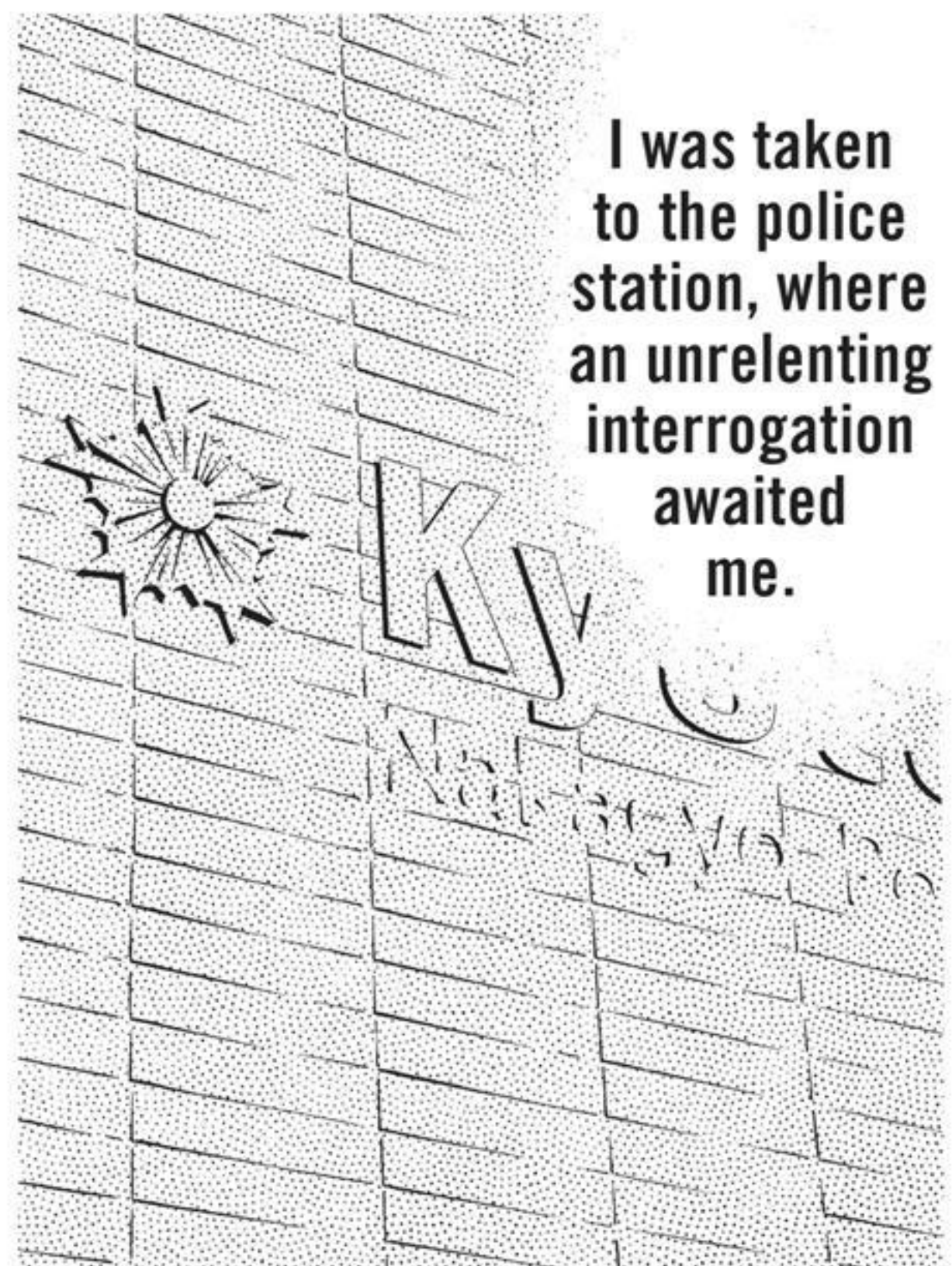
But  
let me tell  
you just a bit  
about what  
happened  
next, to  
follow  
up.

And that's  
basically  
the end of  
my story, my  
trauma from  
ten years  
ago.



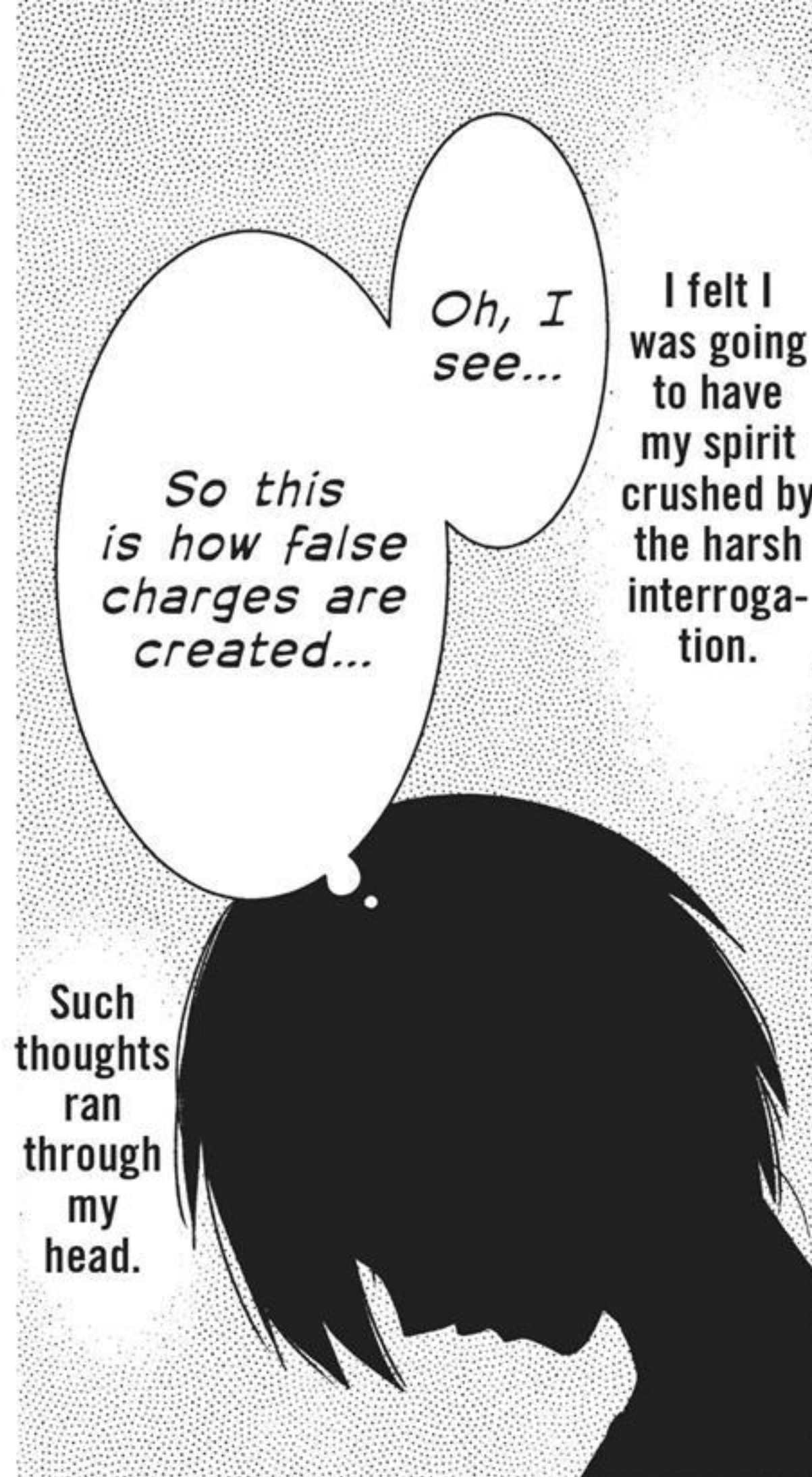
...  
Well,  
actually  
...

It seems  
that, after all,  
an objective  
look at the  
situation did  
make me look  
like the bad  
guy.



I was taken  
to the police  
station, where  
an unrelenting  
interrogation  
awaited  
me.



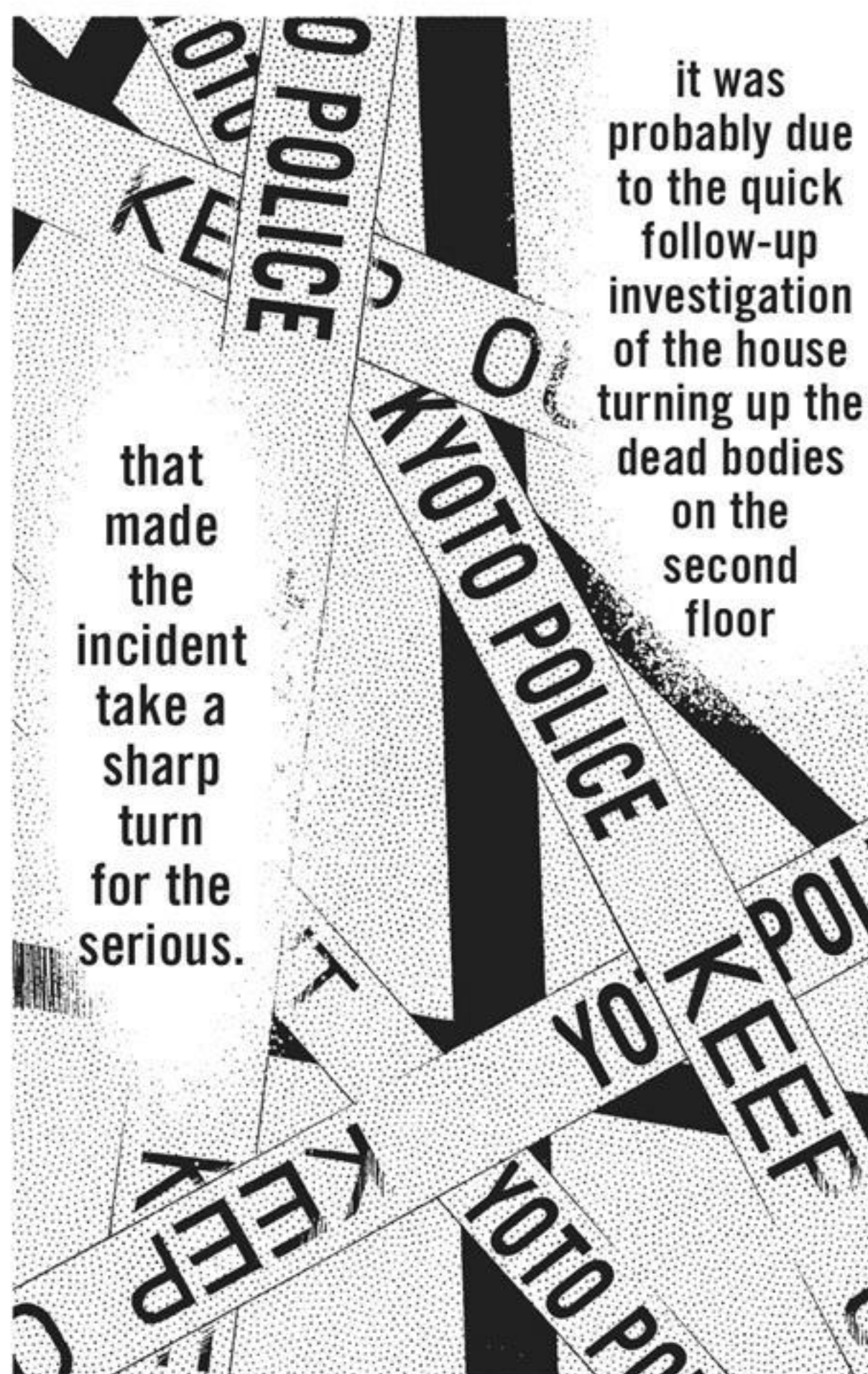


*So this  
is how false  
charges are  
created...*

*Oh, I  
see...*

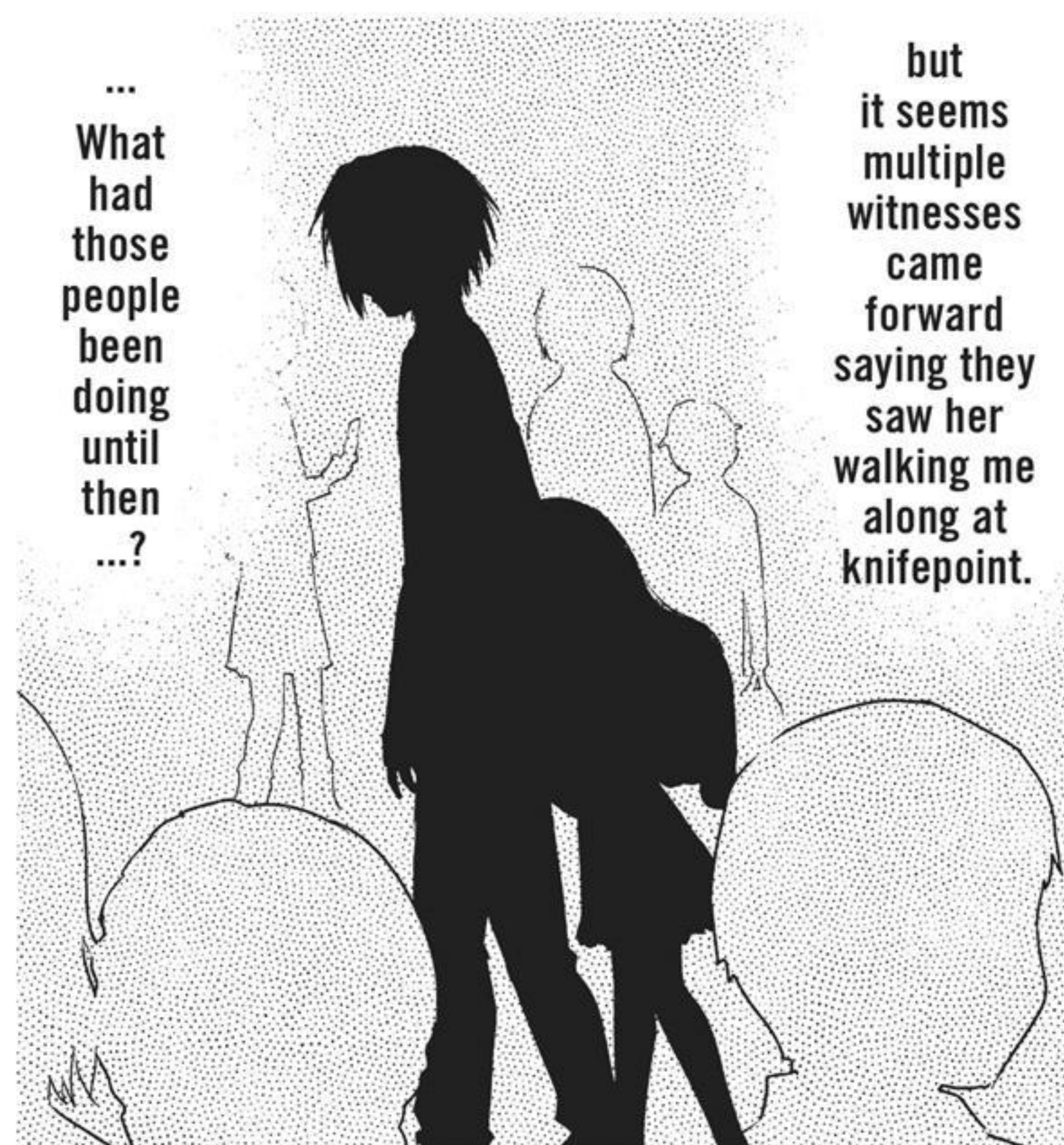
I felt I  
was going  
to have  
my spirit  
crushed by  
the harsh  
interroga-  
tion.

Such  
thoughts  
ran  
through  
my  
head.



it was  
probably due  
to the quick  
follow-up  
investigation  
of the house  
turning up the  
dead bodies  
on the  
second  
floor

that  
made  
the  
incident  
take a  
sharp  
turn  
for the  
serious.



...  
What  
had  
those  
people  
been  
doing  
until  
then  
...?

but  
it seems  
multiple  
witnesses  
came  
forward  
saying they  
saw her  
walking me  
along at  
knifepoint.



But  
fortunately,  
I was  
cleared  
of  
suspicion  
in no  
time.

U's own  
testimony  
must have  
played  
some  
part,



**SPECIAL**  
**ss Simultaneous**  
**Terror**  
**Attacks?!**

there was barely any news coverage of her parents' death, considering it was a case of a husband and wife killing one another.

But U's childish game of kidnapping aside,

I heard they decided not to charge U with the crime of false arrest and imprisonment.

When I think about the police's visit to my home afterwards and their stern effort to silence me,

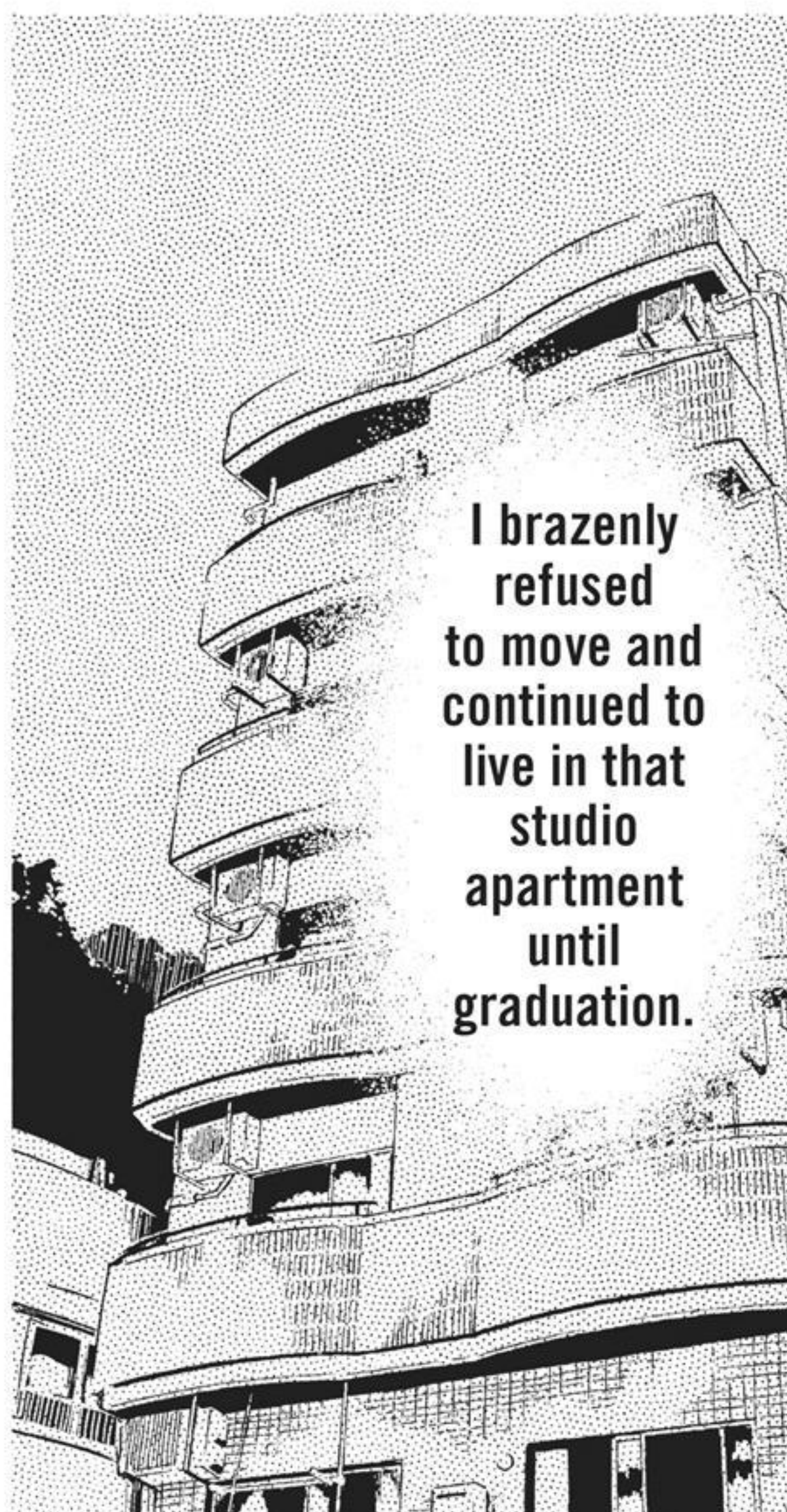
I assume that means U's father and mother were just that important.

They were the actions of a grade schooler, after all... The consensus seemed to be that a kind college student had decided to go along with her decision to "play kidnapper."

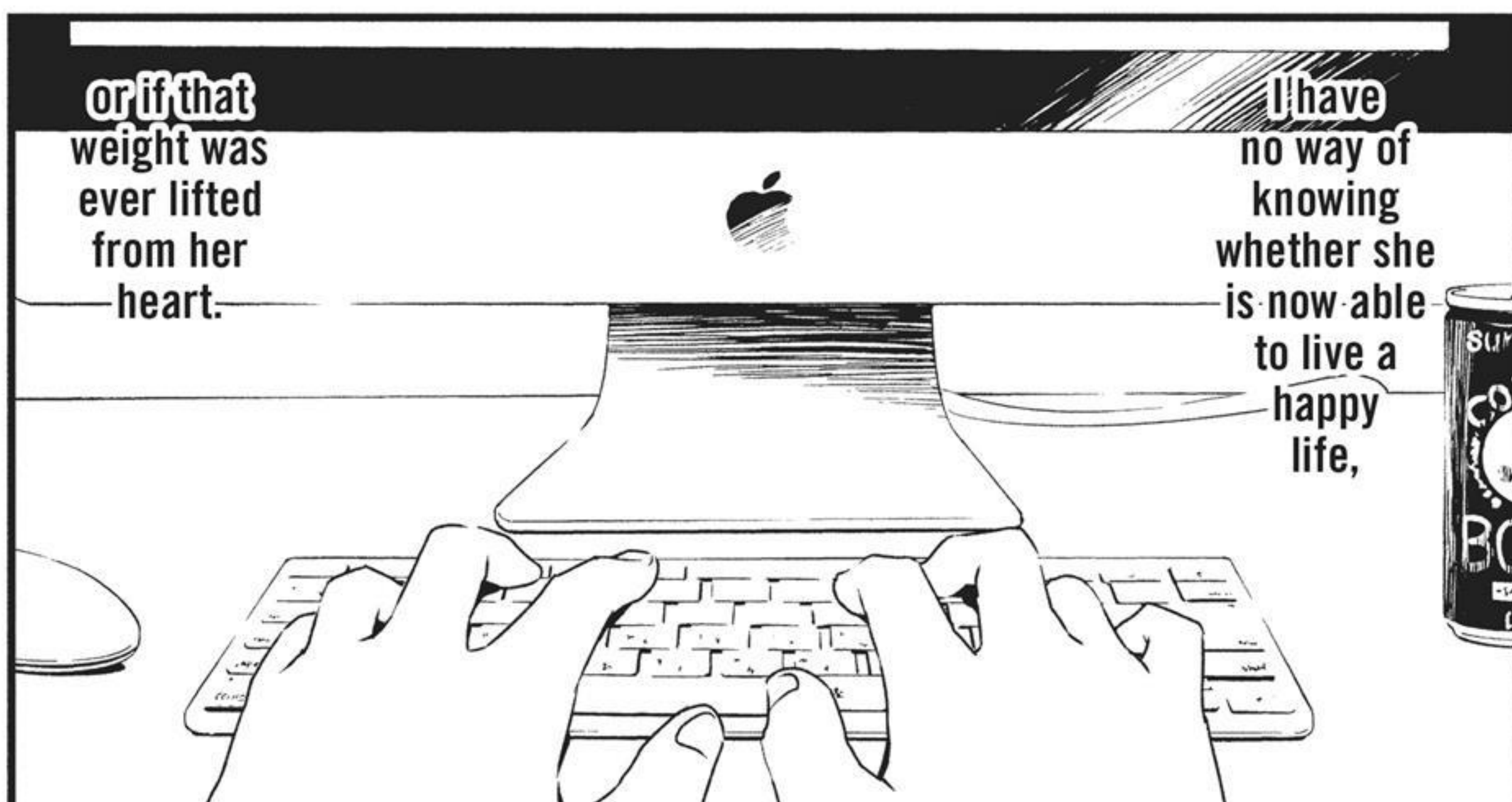




I heard  
that she  
was taken in  
by relatives  
who lived  
overseas.



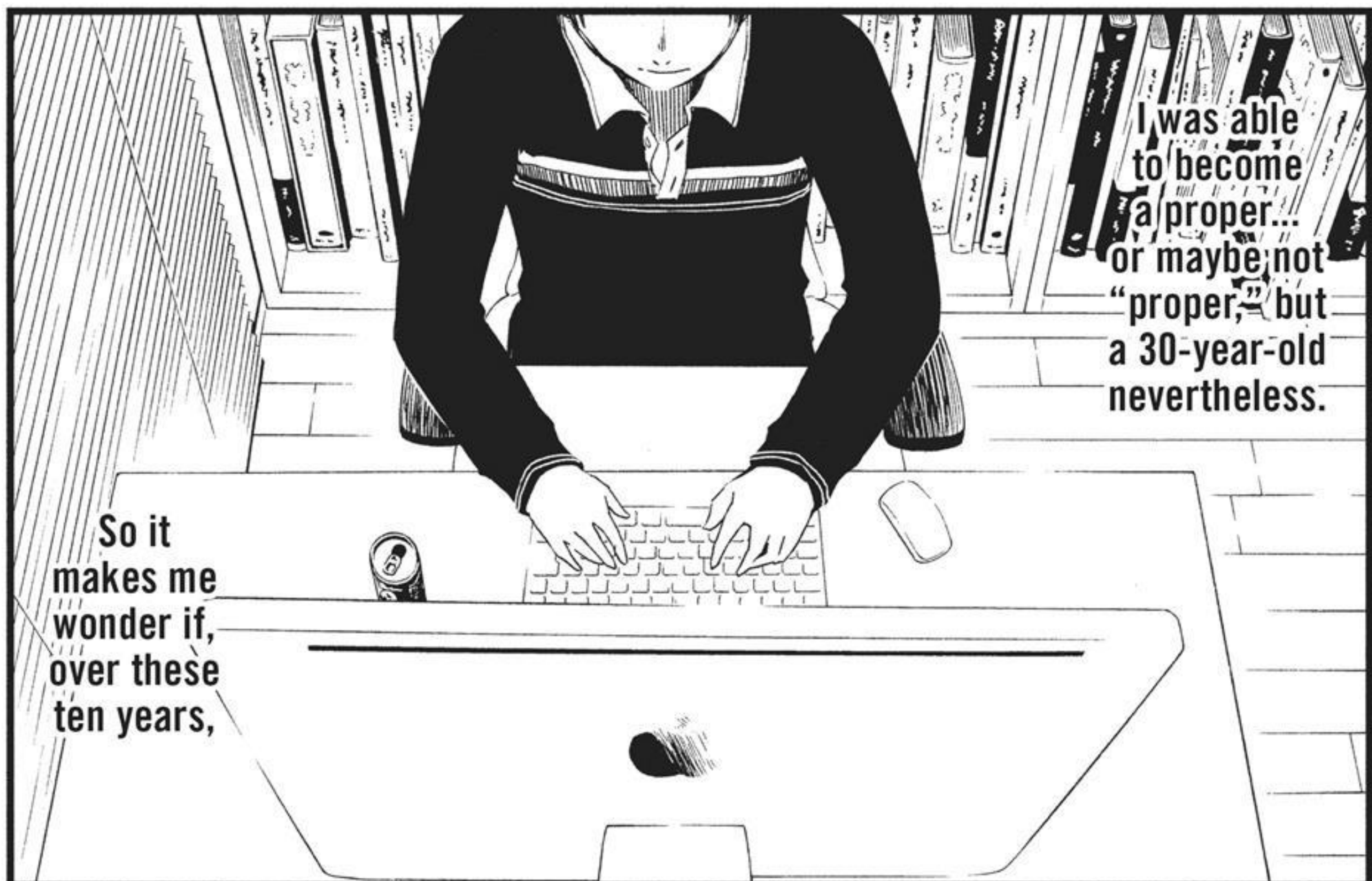
I brazenly  
refused  
to move and  
continued to  
live in that  
studio  
apartment  
until  
graduation.



or if that  
weight was  
ever lifted  
from her  
heart.

I have  
no way of  
knowing  
whether she  
is now able  
to live a  
happy  
life,





I was able  
to become  
a proper...  
or maybe not  
"proper," but  
a 30-year-old  
nevertheless.

So it  
makes me  
wonder if,  
over these  
ten years,



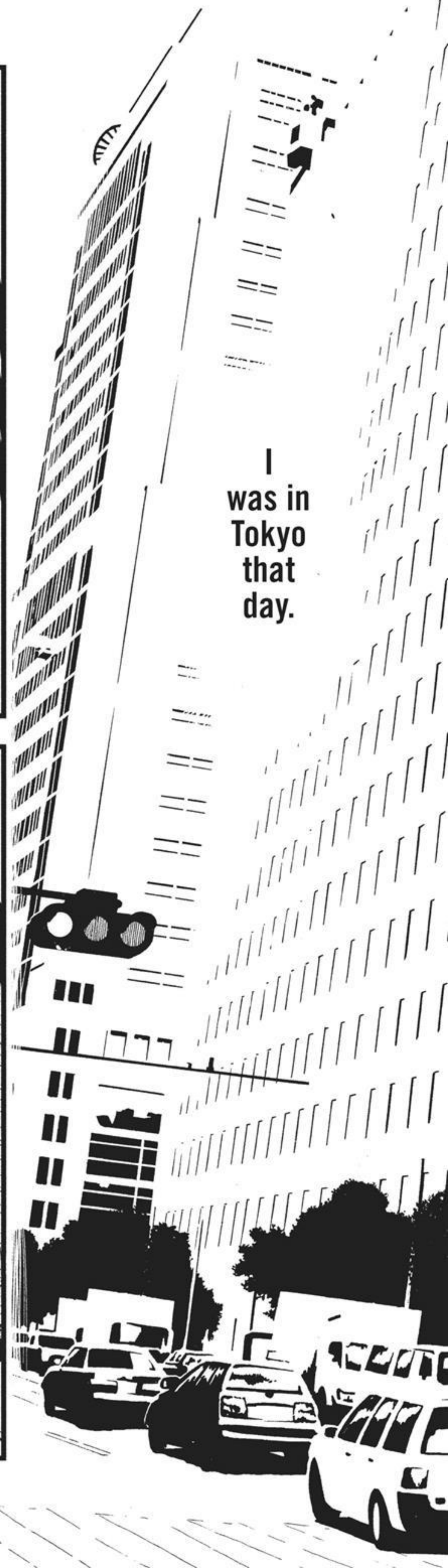
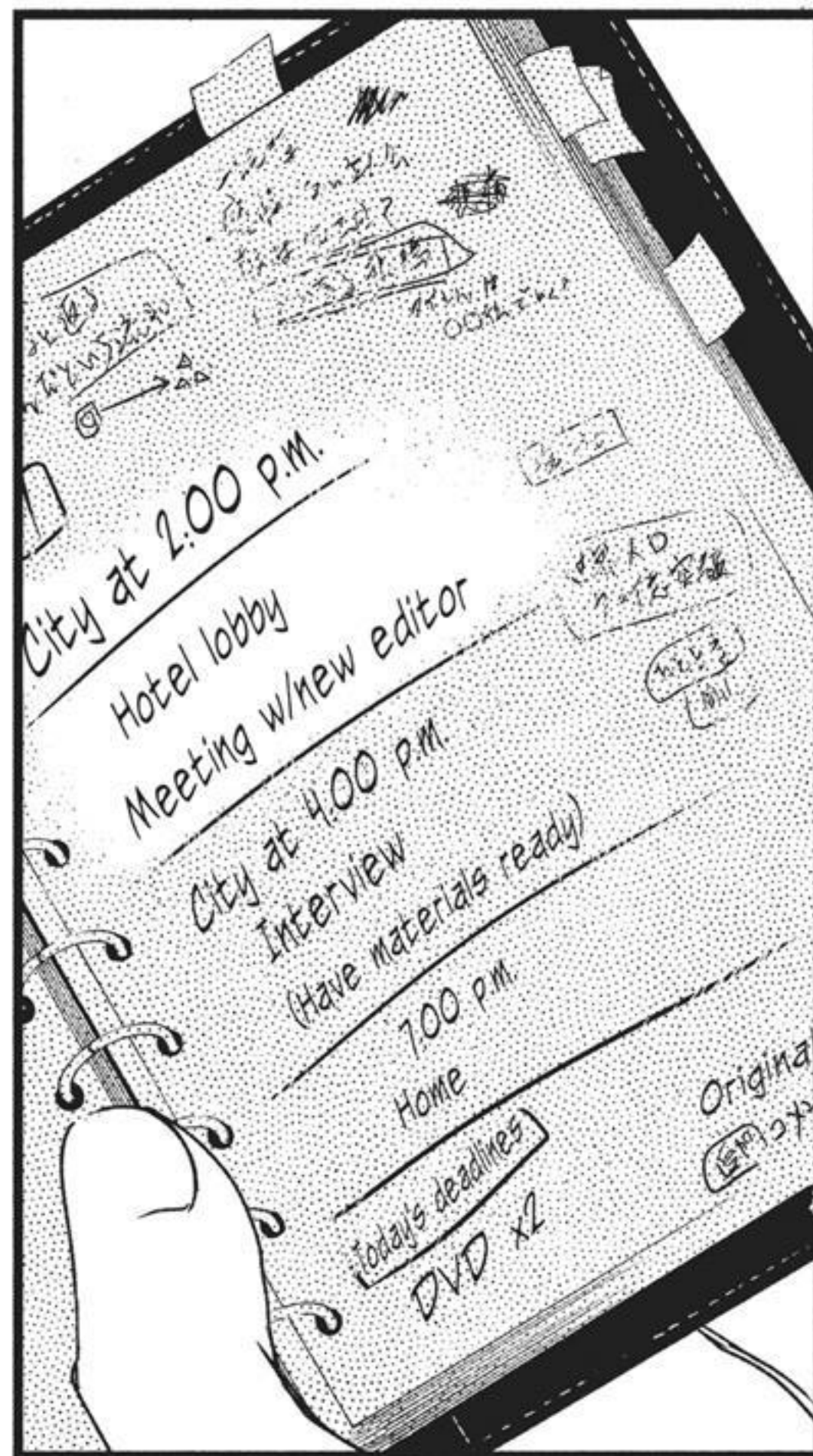
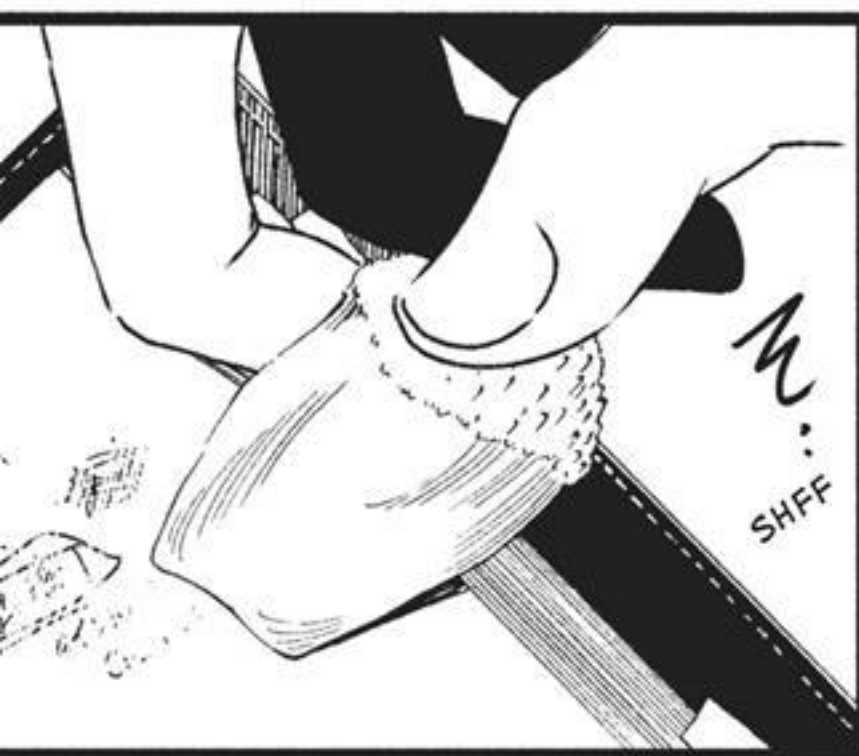
she's  
been able  
to live a  
proper...  
or maybe  
not  
"proper,"  
but a life  
neverthe-  
less...



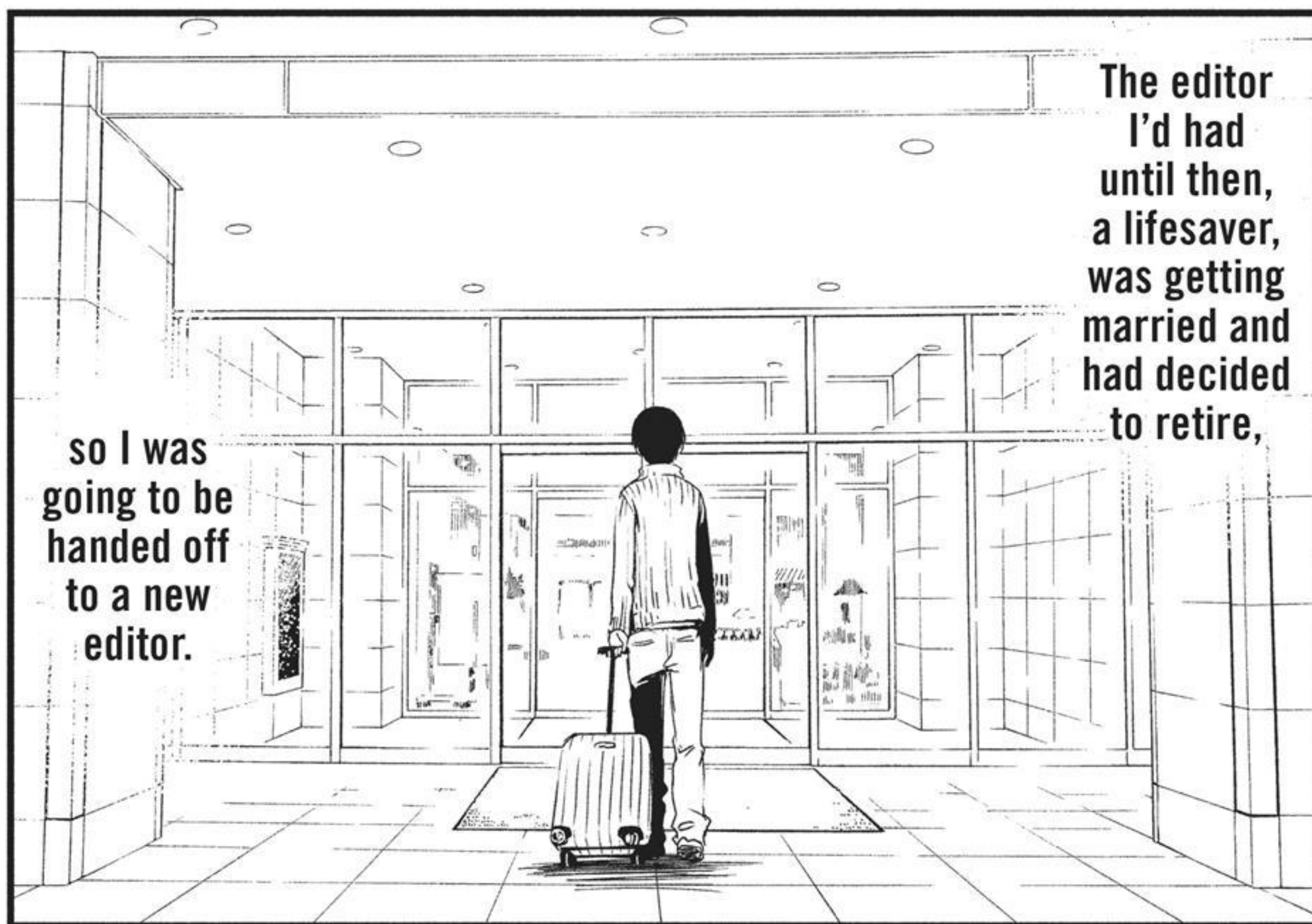
# 27



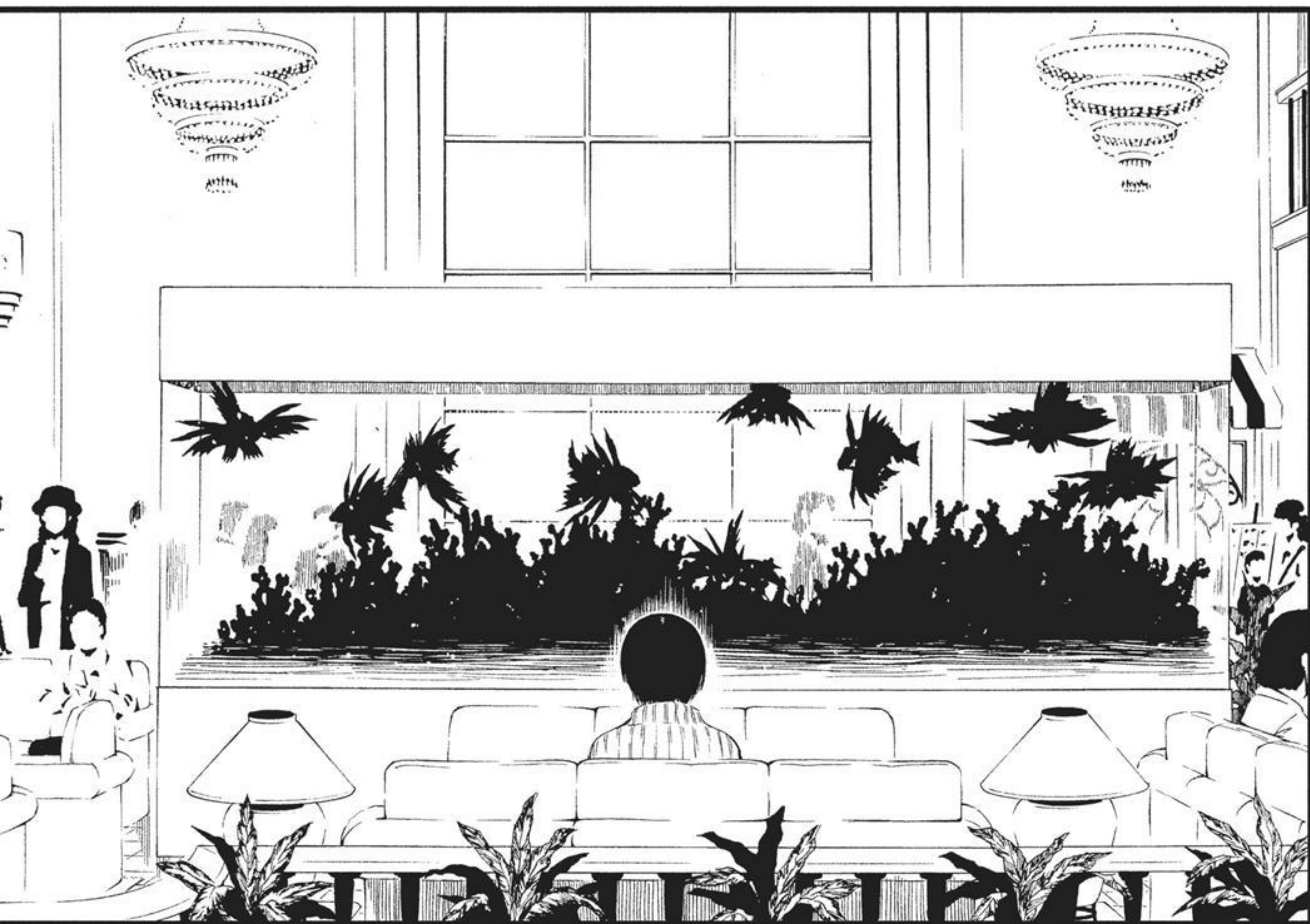




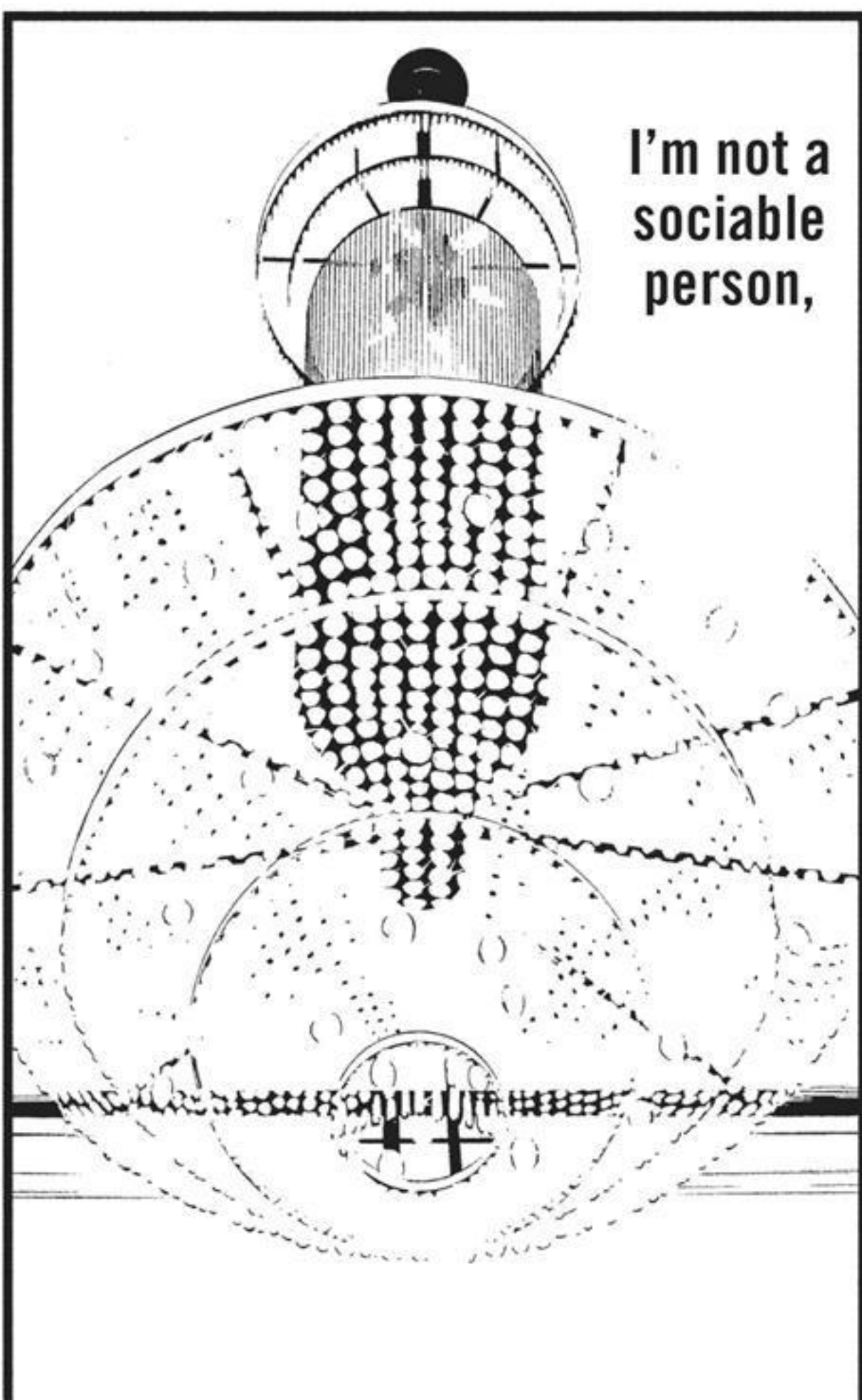






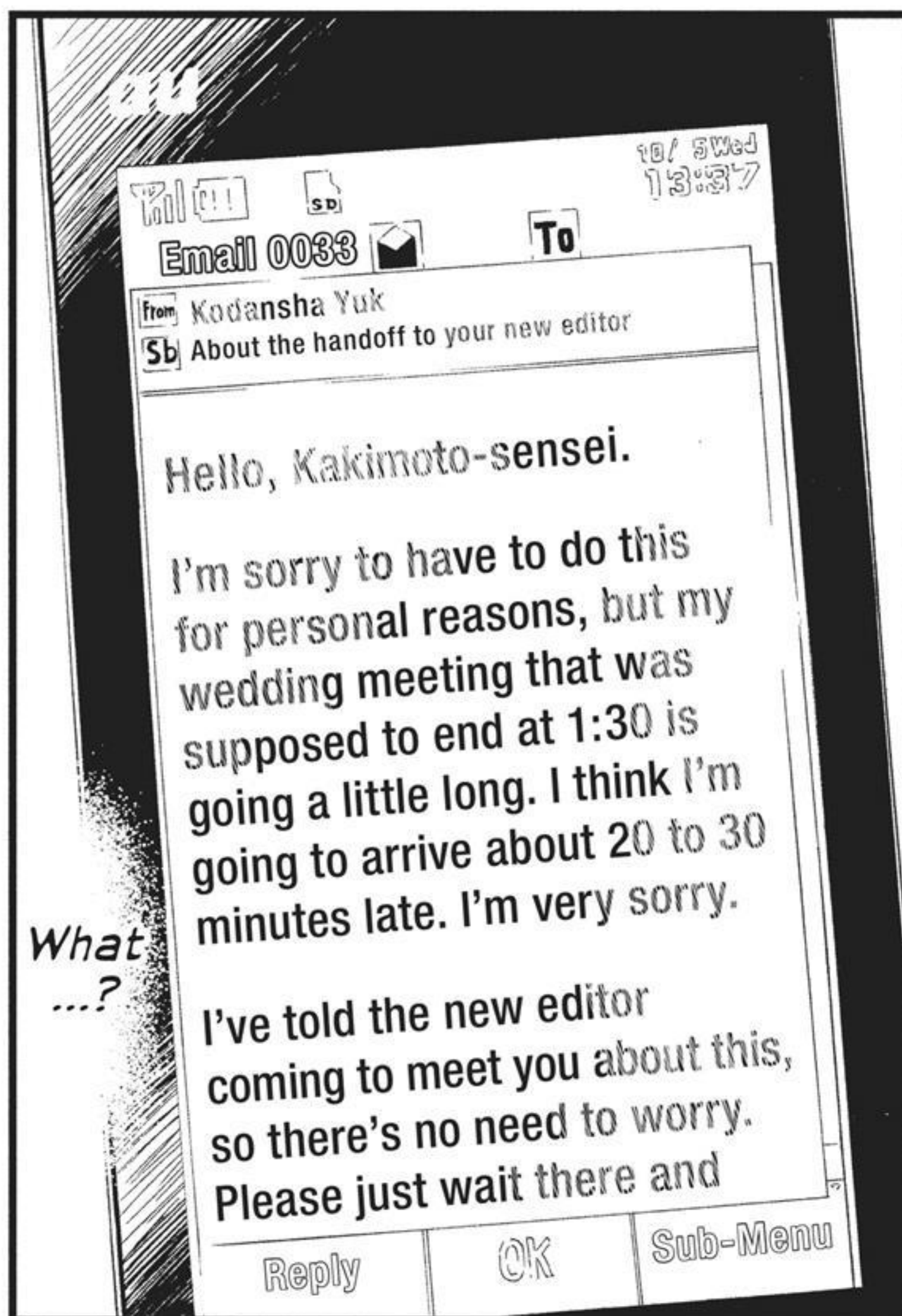


but  
knowing  
when you  
need to  
resign  
yourself  
to fate is  
part of  
the job.



I'm not a  
sociable  
person,

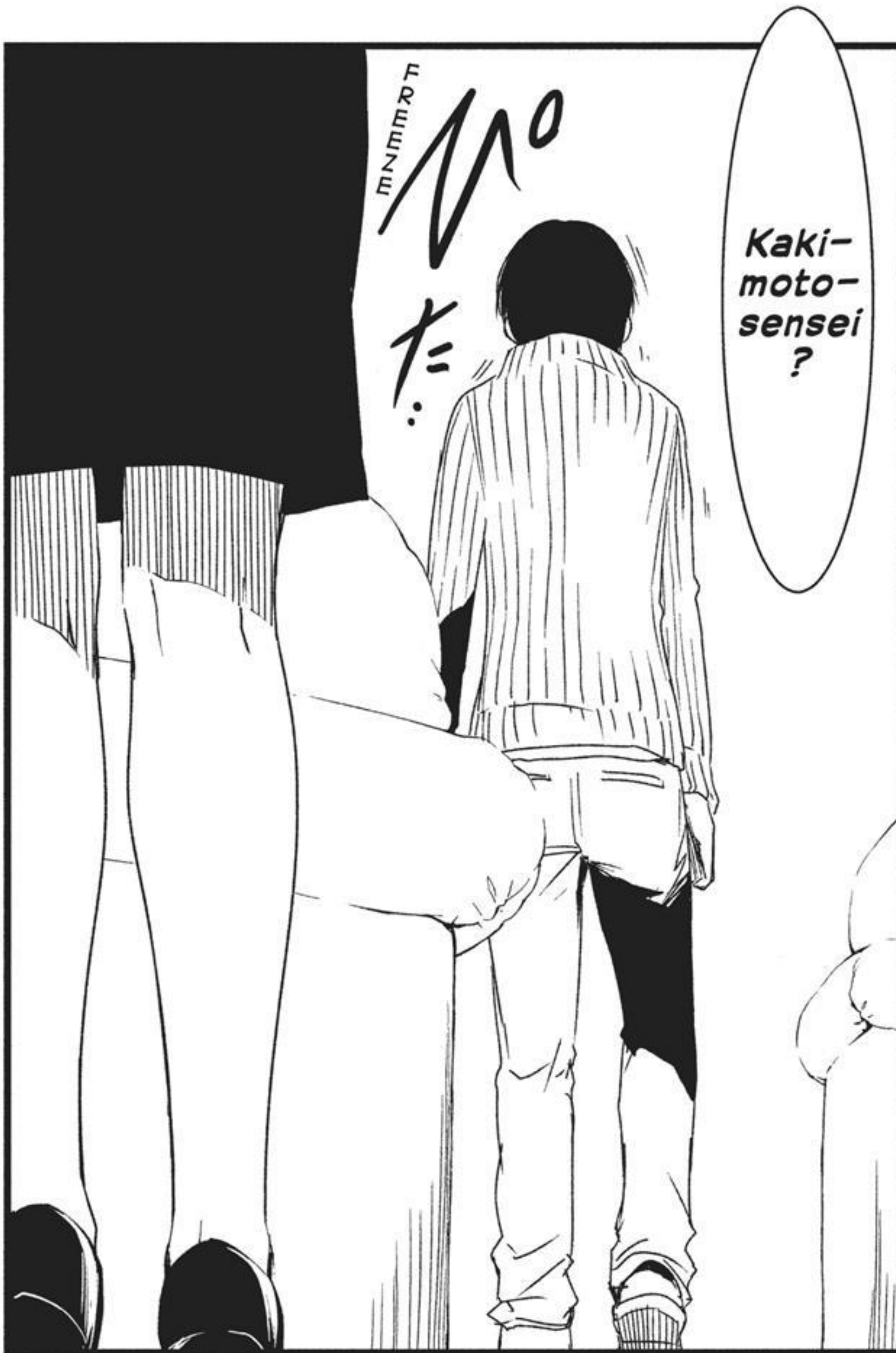




























My  
name  
is Yuu  
Yuugure.

I've loved  
reading your  
work ever  
since I was  
a child.

I'm very  
happy to  
be able to  
meet you  
like this.

...Huh.



She's  
young, but  
she knows  
how to  
greet  
someone  
politely.

I'm  
impressed.

I'm  
looking  
forward  
to  
working  
with  
you.

I hope  
to hear a  
lot of fun  
and exciting  
stories from  
you.





*But  
I can  
forgive a  
mistake  
like that.*



*If I  
had to  
nit-pick  
some-  
thing,  
it'd be  
the  
fact  
that*

*you  
read an  
author's  
stories,  
not hear  
them...*



*...I  
can't  
let her  
outdo  
me.*



*I see  
why they  
call her  
a rising  
star.*

*No...  
Those  
good  
manners  
could just  
be the  
result  
of her  
parents  
raising  
her well.*





since  
I  
last—

It's  
been  
ten  
years

I  
guess  
I'll  
answer  
her  
with a  
proper  
greeting  
of my  
own.



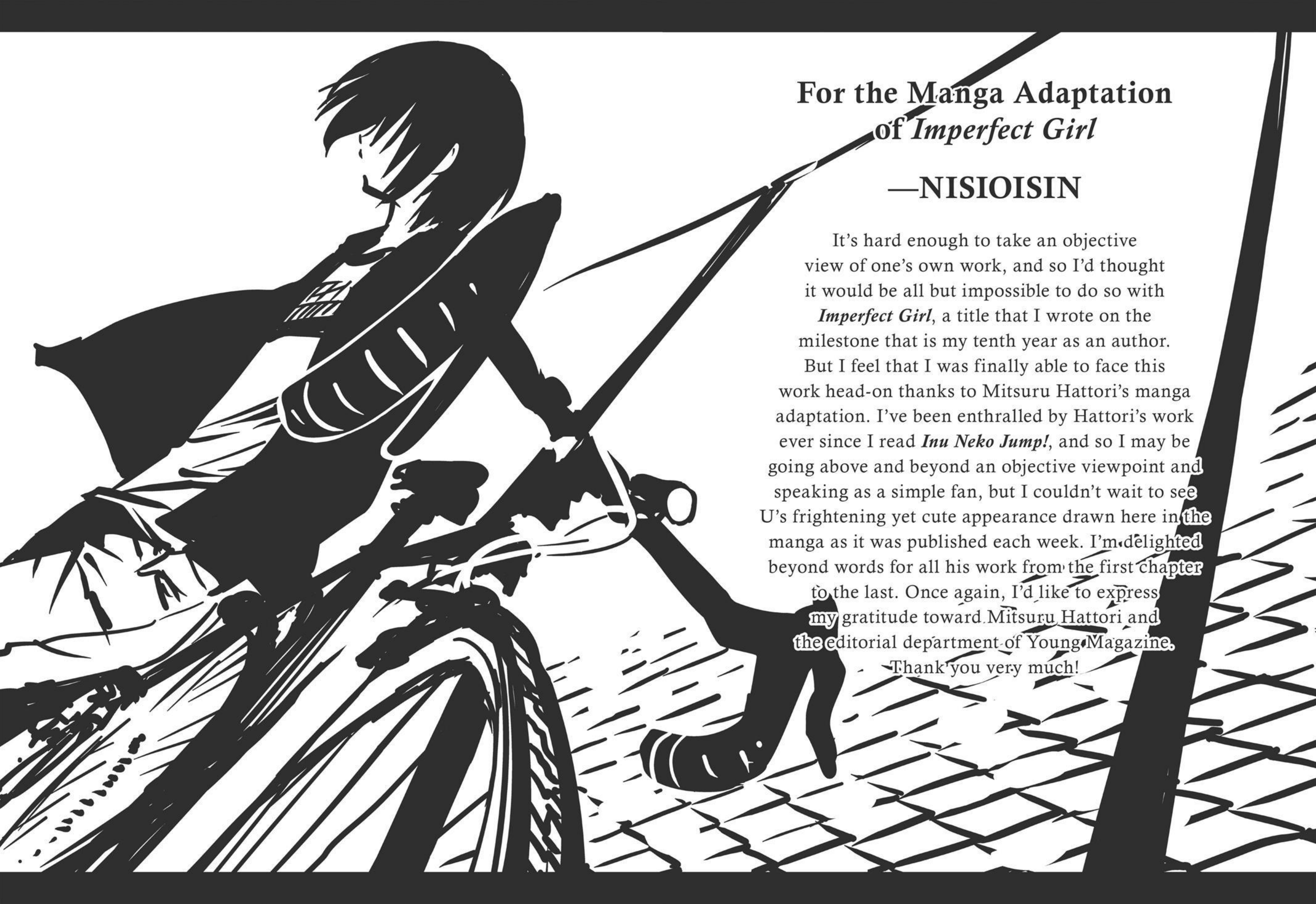


NICE  
TO  
MEET  
YOU.



**Imperfect Girl: End**





## For the Manga Adaptation of *Imperfect Girl*

—NISIOISIN

It's hard enough to take an objective view of one's own work, and so I'd thought it would be all but impossible to do so with *Imperfect Girl*, a title that I wrote on the milestone that is my tenth year as an author.

But I feel that I was finally able to face this work head-on thanks to Mitsuru Hattori's manga adaptation. I've been enthralled by Hattori's work ever since I read *Inu Neko Jump!*, and so I may be going above and beyond an objective viewpoint and speaking as a simple fan, but I couldn't wait to see U's frightening yet cute appearance drawn here in the manga as it was published each week. I'm delighted beyond words for all his work from the first chapter to the last. Once again, I'd like to express my gratitude toward Mitsuru Hattori and the editorial department of Young Magazine.

Thank you very much!





I also hope that all of the fans of the original novel, as well as all of the readers who started with this manga adaptation, enjoyed reading this work.

—Mitsuru Hattori

I'm really not kidding when I say I had so much fun over this last year as I worked that I found myself wondering if this was some kind of reward. I have nothing but gratitude for NISIOISIN, who gave me this opportunity.

While this was actually my first time drawing a manga based on an original property, I never imagined I would be given so much freedom to do as I wanted. (My storyboards, manuscripts, and final proofs were checked, of course.)

Though I realized how reckless a move it was, after I was mesmerized by NISIOISIN's incredible novel and Foo Midori's cover illustration of U, I made the request myself to create a manga adaptation of *Imperfect Girl* and was given the opportunity to do so.



## **Imperfect Girl 3**

KODANSHA COMICS Digital Edition

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